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1965.  
The loss of unity









## THE LOSS OF UNITY

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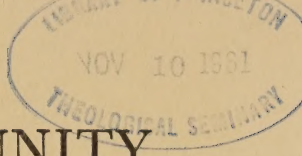
# THE LOSS OF UNITY

*by*

Hoffman ✓ Nickerson

Doubleday & Company, Inc.

Garden City, New York





Made and printed in Great Britain by  
William Clowes and Sons, Limited, London and Beccles

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To  
ADAMS HOFFMAN NICKERSON

My Dear Son,

This book, the writing of which was originally suggested by my reading of your kinsman Henry Adams' *Mont St. Michel and Chartres*, is right-fully yours because of our many discussions of its contents and your sympathy with the spirit in which it is written.



## *Preface*

THIS book is meant chiefly for those who see the divisions of Christendom as a tragedy. Although the attempt to make the Sixteenth Century live again is fascinating for the mere picturesqueness of the story, that Century is more than ever significant today by reason of the increasing desire for Christian reunion. Because the religious quarrel of four hundred years ago left the West divided in religion and therefore in culture ever since, those who would do what they can to heal our unhappy divisions find themselves compelled to try to judge the actors in that quarrel fairly.

Those actors, both leaders and followers, could no more foresee the results of what they did than we can foresee our own future. What sort of people were they and what influences worked upon them as they played their parts?

\* \* \*

As that question has occupied me for more than ten years, a list of those who have helped me would be too long to be read by most readers. I hope that those whose names I have omitted will be sure of my gratitude. However, I cannot forbear to mention Dr. Edward R. Hardy of the Berkeley Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut, Father Francis X. Glimm of the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception, Huntington, Long Island, and Dr. Roland H. Bainton of the Yale Divinity School. The opinions expressed are my own. I must also thank Mr. Mark Kiley, Librarian of the University Club of New York, Dr. Joseph Hart, Librarian of Fordham University, and Mrs. Payson Walker Loomis of the Library of the Episcopal General Theological Seminary.

Since an historian should show his colours, I belong to the American Branch of the Anglican Communion, oddly known at law as the Protestant Episcopal Church, and I share the belief of those within that Church who are usually called Anglo-Catholics—perhaps the unfamiliar term “Western Orthodox” would be more accurate.

Because writers who hope for readers outside as well as inside of the circle of professional scholars must try to make their work pleasant to read, my text has no foot-notes. However, I have kept my considerable mass of notes, and if anyone will write to ask for my authority for this or that statement I will be glad to answer.

## *I. Sails and the Cross*

HAD a man of our own day been carried back in time—invisible himself and in an invisible and noiseless helicopter—hovering over the North Atlantic a little north of the Tropic of Cancer in the early autumn of 1492, he might have seen, far out in mid-ocean, three small ships sailing westward. While still too far off to make out much more than that one was larger than the other two and that all were square-rigged, he would have noted that they were pitching a good deal, considering the mildness of the easterly trade-wind and the moderate sea. Had he been one of the diminishing number of deep sea sailing men he might have reflected that fore-and-aft rigged craft would have thrashed even more. As he approached, he would have seen that their pitching was due to the shape of their hulls which were strangely raised at the bow and even higher at the stern, besides being somewhat broader in proportion to length than those of modern sailing ships. Nevertheless he would have seen that they were sailing well.

Coming closer, a modern sailor would have thought many other things about these little ships odd. In spite of their small size all were three-masted. On their mizzenmasts they carried triangular lateen sails of the sort still common in the Mediterranean and along the Atlantic coasts of certain Latin countries both in Europe and in South America but never seen today in British or North American waters on anything larger than an occasional sailing canoe. These lateens were the only fore-and-aft canvas spread by the three. They had neither jibs nor staysails. Their bowsprits pointed high, and under hers the largest carried a little square spritsail. This craft also had a small maintopmast and square maintopsail above her large mainsail. All had square foresails and no other canvas on their foremasts, and the mainsails of all three,



so our modern sailor would have thought, were disproportionately large compared with their other canvas.

Coming closer, he might have seen on each ship a little cooking fire burning on deck in a wooden box partly filled with earth. He would also have noted the number of heavy ropes which served as shrouds to stay the masts, and that there were no double or triple blocks or tail blocks but that all the blocks were single with both the hauling and the standing parts of their ropes leading away from the block itself. He might have smiled at the fact that a number of the stays which were single throughout most of their length ended in "crows' feet," i.e. in multiple, converging lines like those which sometimes hold out the edges of modern awnings. He would have been astonished to see no steering wheel or tiller on the deck of any of the three, but he would have seen a man posted on deck near the stern of each who, when the course was to be changed, would call down through a hatch—from which our onlooker would rightly suppose that the fellow was directing a helmsman below who could see little or nothing forward. On the high poop of the largest of the three little square-riggers he would probably see a tall man, more richly dressed than the others on board, with ruddy complexion, aquiline nose and thin grey hair with perhaps a trace of red in it.

Our invisible modern, hovering near the poop of the largest ship, might have heard the tall, richly dressed man addressed as Señor Cristobal, the Spanish form of the name of Christopher, the Christ-bearer. Moreover, long before he had come very close, he would have seen another symbol strange to modern sea-going practices: on the sails of the three little ships there were painted crosses.

Those crosses symbolized the religious unity of Western and Central Europe but within less than a generation after Columbus' voyage that unity would be broken.

## *II. Point of Departure*

ALL deep sea voyages have a point of departure from which the navigator shapes his course. Stretching the term to cover a whole society, what was the Europe from which Columbus and his company had sailed?

Our imaginary observer from a considerable height could notice how few the Fifteenth Century paved roads were and how small most towns. Obviously the population was much smaller than that of his own day and that comparatively few people traveled far. He would see that most of them went on foot although some rode on horses. Everyone's dress would be strange to him, and when he came close he would find that except for linen and furs sometimes worn by the richer people their clothes were invariably of wool. There was no cotton. If he came closer his nose might discover that few if any men and women washed as often or as thoroughly as they do now.

In the villages the houses were not entirely unlike those in old-fashioned parts of Europe today, but he would seldom see glass in the windows. What glass there was was in small panes. The poorer folk often had only shutters closed in bad weather, although some windows let in a little daylight through oiled paper.

Our man in the helicopter would notice that almost everywhere there were fortifications. Most villages were overlooked by the high, battlemented stone walls of a castle. All towns had similar walls and inside the towns the streets were narrow, from which a modern man might conclude that this was an age of insecurity in which as many people as could manage to do so wished to live in a fortified town. He would see also that most of those narrow streets were crooked and that the same street would often vary abruptly in width, and if he were historically minded he might know that these variations dated from a time in which the self-interest of locally influential

men had allowed them to encroach on the public way. He would be struck by the great difference between the dress of rich people and that of the poor, and his sense of insecurity because of the universal fortifications would be increased when he noticed that the richer laymen habitually carried swords.

He would also find everywhere a profusion of churches and of priests distinguished from the laity by special dress. The larger churches were great buildings richly ornamented with carved stone and splendid with windows of many-colored glass glowing like vast jewels. In those churches stately ceremonies were performed during much of the day. Numbers of them were centers of large establishments staffed by men and women dressed alike, and if our observer were an educated man he would recognize those uniformed men and women as monks and nuns. If he continued to fly to and fro across Central and Western Europe, then even if he were uneducated he would soon understand that this highly localized, ill-populated society, often squalid but often picturesque and splendid, was unified by a single vast and immensely rich corporation everywhere present, the Catholic, i.e. Universal, Church of the West.

\* \* \*

If our imaginary Twentieth Century man were also able to talk freely with the people of Columbus' day he would of course learn much more about Fifteenth Century Western Christendom. He would soon be told that the only appreciable exception to the universality of the Western Church was the nonconformity of the Bohemian Hussites, a local affair connected with the Czechs' dislike for Germans, and one which showed no signs of spreading. If he did not know that priests were everywhere believed to possess mystical powers to affect the fate of the soul by means of sacraments, i.e. ceremonies through which Divine Grace is channeled to men of good will, he would soon be informed. He would be shocked at the harshness of judicial punishments, but if he continued his inquiry into that matter he would find that their ferocity indicated only an absence of the modern horror at physical pain and was compatible with a considerable



degree of ordinary kindliness and Christian charity as in Spain or Russia today.

He would also be told that the Church was already very old. The earthly life of her Founder was as distant in time from 1492 as we are from the defeat of Attila and his Huns near Chalons in A.D. 451 while Roman Emperors in unbroken succession still reigned in the West. That Church was not a product of the Dark or Middle Ages but had come down to them from the ancient world. If, however, our modern observer had some knowledge of history it would have struck him that even the learned medieval men to whom he talked knew only very imperfectly the history of their central institution. In medieval painted or carved representations of ancient events, for instance martyrdoms of the early Christians under the pagan Emperors, the custom of dressing up ancient men and women in medieval costume was not merely a childlike piece of artistic license. It typified the inability of medieval men to imagine ancient man as at all different from themselves. Consequently any modern man, no matter what his individual religious belief or lack of belief, would find Columbus' contemporaries thinking of the early Christians in terms of their own world. In other words, he would find them overestimating the undoubted factor of continuity in the Church and underestimating the equally undoubted factor of development and change.

Probably, however, our imaginary modern observer translated back in time would not greatly concern himself with this medieval lack of historical perspective. He would be more likely to be struck by the many-sidedness of the medieval Church and with the varied functions which that Church performed outside of what he would consider the definitely religious sphere. She was not only the chief patron of the arts in which Our Lord and Our Lady were the most frequent subjects for painting and sculpture. She was also the only source of learning and higher education. Almost all who could read and write were "clerks," and nearly all clerks, whether they were priests or not, belonged to the privileged order of the clergy. None of the clergy could be tried in the ordinary secular courts. If accused of crime they had only to claim "benefit of clergy" and they would be tried in the local

bishop's court. All clerks knew Latin so that Fifteenth Century society, in which most people moved about so slowly and so little, was unified by possessing a common language. Still another function of the Church was to stimulate travel—when people went on trips far from their homes they usually did so as pilgrims to the shrine of some Saint whose intercession they may have sought when in trouble. More rarely they made the great pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

In a word, medieval men thought of Christendom as one country in which the boundaries between its provinces were unimportant when compared to the great barrier between the Christian and the non-Christian worlds.

Our observer might be a little astonished to discover that this small, comparatively poor and unsanitary but unified Western Christendom with its pervasive Church had stabilizing forces within it which worked to keep it in balance. In spite of its universal practice of fortification and the preoccupation of its gentry with arms it had succeeded in limiting war. Except for the armed servants of its richer men and the little bodyguards of its kings, its typical soldier was a militiaman who could be called out for service outside of his own immediate neighbourhood for only forty days in the year. After that his overlord had to persuade him to stay out by paying him, which that overlord would rarely do since all extraordinary taxation was in practice a matter of voluntary grants, and credit hardly existed. Even when paid, the lesser men could go home when they liked. Consequently offensives on any scale and far from one's base were seldom attempted. All told, therefore, the frequent armed scuffles between Christians were socially tolerable. The Valois and the Plantagenet families could fight for a hundred years over who was to be King of France without irretrievably ruining the country which was the theatre of the war.

Besides limiting war, medieval men tried hard to regulate their localized economies. The "Just Price" which in practice bore a certain relation to the cost of production was a universal idea. It had an upper and a lower bracket and to sell above its upper or below its lower limit was everywhere a moral and usually a legal offense. To sell too high was to cheat the consumer while to sell too low cheated the pro-

ducer. All non-agricultural economic activity was cooperatively organized in guilds. The handicraft guilds enforced the Just Price, kept up standards of quality and limited the numbers of those who could be apprenticed to particular trades in order to avoid the glutting of the market. Medieval churchmen had long suspected merchants, for how could the Just Price be applied to those who lived by buying and selling goods which they had not made?

Finally, borrowing and lending, which play so enormous a part in our global and local economies today, were restricted because Christians were forbidden to take usury which was defined in Aristotle's terms as taking interest on an economically unproductive loan. In other words it was thought both sinful and absurd that borrowed money which was being used for a purpose which would not produce additional wealth, for instance relieving an aged man's necessities, building a church or fighting a war, should be allowed to "breed" additional money.

The convenience of unproductive borrowing was such that the Jews who were present in small numbers throughout most of Western Christendom were allowed to practice usury and sometimes became rich. They had a separate legal status and were under the special protection of the Kings under whom they lived but medieval policing was often inefficient, the Jews were seldom popular and sometimes suffered from the general dislike of them.

\* \* \*

Although a mid-Twentieth Century man fresh from the mass massacres, economic seesaws, internal quarrels and general ill-ease of our own time might have been unduly impressed with the elements of stability in the Christendom of nearly five hundred years ago, nevertheless if he continued his observations he would soon see that new forces were at work in that society.

In the first place there was a whole flock of recent technical achievements. Columbus' voyages, as we shall see in more detail in the next chapter, would not have been possible without recent improvements in ship-building and rigging, geography and navigation. Printing was beginning to make

reading matter cheaper and more plentiful. Uniform copies not only of books but also of pamphlets and broadsheets could now be struck off in considerable numbers, thus furnishing a new means of spreading information, propaganda and ideas. Gunpowder was affecting warfare. Cannon, especially when firing iron balls, could quickly break down the high stone walls of old-fashioned fortifications. Even in mobile campaigns field-guns were playing a part and hand firearms were about to do so.

Besides these technical improvements and to some extent because of them there were new economic, social and political developments. Increased commerce was raising prices and making the merchant class richer, thus building up the importance of a group which it had been difficult in theory and impossible in practice to fit into the medieval scheme. At the same time the rise in prices was making life difficult for the lesser men among the landowning gentry whose incomes came from customary dues which could not be competitively raised like rents. Both the rise of the merchants and the invention of cannon strengthened the authority of the central kingships. Since the Kings' function was to keep the peace throughout their kingdoms the merchants favored them because the "King's peace" encouraged trade. At the same time the increased mercantile wealth made for greater royal revenues, and only Kings and local Sovereigns could afford the new artillery which could promptly batter down a nobleman's castle. All these tendencies were only beginning; commerce was still only a trickle compared with that of today and kings' incomes amounted to no more than a negligible fraction of the masses of wealth raised by modern taxation. The military importance of the gentry with their horses, their armor and their habit of arms was still considerable. Nevertheless the changes were already noticeable, and to old-fashioned people those changes were shocking.

An observer moving freely about in late Fifteenth Century Christendom would have noticed another important matter: almost everywhere there was grumbling against the Church. Men would be continually telling him that the clergy in general and the Higher Clergy in particular were too rich and too worldly, that what amounted to taxes paid to the



Clergy were too high, and that monks were lazy, worthless creatures.

Some of this discontent could be put down to the inevitable friction between what appears to be common sense and the claims of an organization which teaches doctrines transcending human reason. Again, some of it would be due to mere competition for power between the great officers of the Church and this or that rich layman. Further inquiry, however, would show that there was much reason for complaint. The multiplication of legends and the reverence paid to relics, some of which were certainly false, offended thinking people. Worse yet, clerical taxes were indeed very large, and high positions in the Church were often handed out to members of influential families—sometimes even to children!—merely so that the recipient might enjoy for life the large income which went with the benefice. Often one would find rich bishops or abbots who had never been near the places from which they drew their revenue. Inquirers would be told that such individuals held their offices *in commendam*, using a small part of their revenues to pay some needy churchman to do the spiritual duties for them. One would see monasteries inhabited by a dwindling handful of monks who kept a pack of hounds and spent much of their time in wholesome but not conspicuously spiritual field sports. With so many clerical millionaires leading the lives of splendid and luxurious functionaries it was no wonder that not a few priests were vicious. In some parts at least of Christendom the habitual unchastity of the nominally celibate Clergy was a gigantic scandal. The corruption of the late-medieval Church has been exaggerated by historians who hated her but no learned man among her friends today can deny that the corruption existed.

Discontent with the Church of Columbus' day was largely formless. Except for the Bohemian Hussites whom we have already noticed, her doctrines were definitely opposed only by isolated individuals who attracted no following and were considered disagreeable eccentrics. Even the Hussites were if anything more interested in disciplinary than in doctrinal questions; their chief point was their insistence upon restoring the original Christian custom of having the laity drink from the Communion Cup after the priest—a contention

which can be taken as anti-clerical but can hardly be said to touch the Faith directly.

Complaining against the Church was particularly strong among merchants, "business men" as we would call them, and among handicraftsmen in the towns. In the case of the merchants we can be reasonably sure that they disliked the Church's regulation of business and her suspicion of riches gained by buying and selling, although there seems no trace of open opposition on that ground in the records. Why the handicraftsmen grumbled as they did is not clear. Perhaps they felt more strongly than others that they were financially oppressed by the clergy.

At all events from all over Western Christendom there had been a cry for "a reformation of the Church in Head and Members."

Now the head of the Church was the Pope, the Bishop of Rome. For about a thousand years Popes had been subjects of the Emperors and sometimes very humble subjects. For instance, about A.D. 600 we find so famous a Pope as Gregory the Great calling himself "a worm" in a letter to his Imperial Master of Constantinople. In the Eleventh Century, however, the Popes had made themselves politically independent of all secular authority by taking over the government of the city and neighborhood of Rome. This assertion of temporal power had led to an intense and prolonged struggle lasting for several centuries between the Papacy and the so-called Holy Roman Emperors of the West during which the Popes increased as far as they could the contributions made to them by their supporters throughout Christendom.

By the time of the papal victory these contributions had hardened into a system of taxation which continued through a series of disasters which followed that victory. First the Papacy was, as it were, kidnapped by the King of France and for nearly a century the Popes lost prestige by exercising their authority not from Rome but from the provincial town of Avignon. During this "Babylonish Captivity," as it was called, there came the fearful plague known as the Black Death which horribly reduced the population of the West, after which medieval social forms began to stiffen and petrify. Next the papal succession itself became disputed. For two

generations in what was known as "The Great Schism" there were two and sometimes three individuals claiming to be the legitimate Pope and therefore compelled to bargain with powerful lay people for support against their rivals for that office. General or Ecumenical Councils of the Church had always been the supreme authority for deciding disputed points of Faith—to the word "Ecumenical" we shall return in later Chapters. A series of Western Councils was held in order to heal the Schism, and there was much disputing about the relative powers of Councils and Popes. At long last in A.D. 1447, only four years before Columbus' birth, the last remnant of that Schism disappeared and a universally acknowledged Pope again sat in St. Peter's chair at Rome.

The often-repeated cry for a reform of the Church in Head and Members was less heard. Papal taxation continued, and in appearance the old state of Europe had returned. In reality much had changed.

\* \* \*

Going back to our imaginary observer of the Europe of Columbus' day, as he went to and fro he would find a vast difference between Italy and the other provinces of Western Christendom. North and west of the Alps he would find society full of routine and touched with melancholy. The technical, economic and political novelties at which we have just glanced were all present, especially the new strength of the kingships, but no new ideas had come with them. Moreover there was something cold, scheming and sinister about a number of the greater men. Louis XI of France who had died a few years before had been a miserly schemer and a monster of superstition, going about with little leaden images of famous statues of Our Lady in his greasy cap and threatening this or that image that he might stop paying his devotions to it when some plan of his miscarried—just as if each of them was more than a representation of Our Lady in heaven! Henry VII of England too was a miser. Maximilian of Hapsburg who was about to become Holy Roman Emperor and Ferdinand of Aragon in eastern Spain were more soldierly than Louis and Henry but both were models of bad faith and Maximilian was so eccentric that many thought him mad.

There was much talk of witchcraft. In the universities the breadth of the scholastic philosophy was being lost in subtlety. A favorite subject for painting was the Dance of Death, not like Walt Whitman's "tender and soothing death" or St. Francis' "praised be God for our sister the death of the body" but death in the sense of hopelessness, corruption and decay. Painting and sculpture were usually content to refine upon the sacred themes treated during the more hopeful time that had preceded the Black Death. Architecture remained Gothic but Gothic of a decadent sort. In England the "Perpendicular" style, for instance in Henry VII's elaborately ornamented Chapel at Westminster, compared with earlier English work was mechanical and dull. In France the "Flamboyant" continued the amazing Gothic suggestion of mystery and the unseen world but usually with something strained and unwholesome about it, like a beautiful woman wasted with fever. The arts still sought to praise the ascetic ideal but they did so without the same virility as before.

It is, I think, significant that three modern masters of the word, Victor Hugo, Robert Louis Stevenson and Hilaire Belloc, have symbolized the chill and the melancholy of the end of the Middle Ages in the North by imagining Fifteenth Century Paris at night and in the winter. We read in Belloc's *Paris*: "Victor Hugo shows you Paris moonlit in the snow from the towers of Notre Dame; its little winding streets like streams of black water in breaking ice, its infinite variety of ornament catching the flakes that have fallen. Stevenson shows you Paris moonlit in the snow from the eyes of poor Villon wandering after the murder, and afraid of wolves and of the power of the King. The whole spirit is that of the night."

We are tempted to think of Villon himself as characteristic of his place and time. A great poet, a believer and something of a scholar, he was at the same time a debauched vagabond and a thief suspected of murder, who was banished for crime and whose end is unrecorded.

Another symbol is the contrast between the Thirteenth Century story of Tannhauser and the Fifteenth Century tragedy of Faust. Tannhauser the Christian knight is lured by Venus into some strange underground world of hers, and



years afterward when he returns and seeks absolution the Pope himself tells him that it would be easier for a dead staff to bud and flower again than for him to be forgiven—whereat the staff in the Pope's hand begins to bud, the Pope is rebuked and Tannhauser is saved. Much the same is true of a whole cluster of early medieval popular tales in which jovial, blundering, sinful men have the last laugh on the Devil. But when Faust bargains away his soul to the Devil his late repentance does not save him. The bargain stands and his soul is dragged down to Hell.

Here and there one might have found traces of a different mood. Villon's lines:

Corps femenin, qui tant es tendre,  
Poly, souef, si precieux,

in English: "Oh woman's body, so tender, smooth, soft and precious," have a new, insistent boldness. At the festivities accompanying the formal entry of some great Prince into a Flemish or northern French city an onlooker would have seen crowds admiring the public nudity of women acting in "living pictures," some as mermaids swimming in a river near a bridge over which the great man would pass, others on a platform reciting verses of welcome to an accompaniment of music. These things, however, were exceptions. In general, north of the Alps the mood of that time was one of repression and sadness.

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Meanwhile south of the terrific barrier of the mountains an observer would have found activity and cheerfulness. In the Italian sunshine Rome enjoyed the vast revenues of the papacy while other cities were enriched by manufacture and commerce. The steel of Milan and the woolen cloth of Florence were famous. Banking was far more developed than elsewhere in Christendom, and "Lombard Street" is still a synonym for "the London bankers." The sea-going Italian city states and especially Venice monopolized the immensely valuable trade with the Far East, most of it in things of no great bulk which were luxuries for the rich, spices, pepper, silks, fine fabrics, ivory and jewels.

At the same time much of the peninsula was a crazy-quilt of little states of which only Venice had a tradition of legitimate, settled government. The others rocked with revolutions in which republican forms sometimes ousted a local despot although more often the despots devoured either the republics or each other. So high was the energy of the Italians that they flourished in spite of this political turmoil.

A traveler among them would also have seen at once that they were being carried along by an equally revolutionary torrent of new arts and ideas which English-speaking people call by the French word "Renaissance" meaning a rebirth, in this case a rebirth or restoration of ancient Greece and still more of ancient Rome. The Renaissance appealed to the senses. Far from urging people to think of the next world, its arts and letters invited them to enjoy themselves here and now. In architecture it replaced the Gothic pointed arches and heavenward-pointing pinnacles with an exquisitely proportioned but full-bodied style with classic columns and domes. Its Madonnas were no longer idealized Queens of Heaven. Instead they were often lifelike portraits of some lovely mistress of the artist who painted them. Its representations of male saints usually made them either charming youths or muscular athletes in high training. One famous Renaissance picture of Our Lord has been called "an Adonis of Galilee." Similarly the typical Renaissance scholar called himself a humanist and despised both the jog-trot medieval Latin—in which the order of words was like that of modern English or French—and despised still more the close reasoning and unornamented style of the scholastic philosophers. For these humanists the literary quality most worth having was elegance, for instance the melodies of Virgil or the rolling periods of Cicero.

The Renaissance also had its intellectual side which blended with the technical advances which were being made in the North. Its scholars vividly appreciated Greek poetry and philosophy, the taproot of European culture, as their medieval predecessors had not done. If its artists made their saints muscular it was in part because they themselves knew something of anatomy. The greater among those artists understood both linear and atmospheric perspective. The

Renaissance was also beginning to appreciate historical perspective or, if you prefer, historical relativity. When it represented ancient people, such as characters from the Bible, it no longer dressed them like medieval Europeans but consciously tried to show them in ancient clothes.

It would be useless to ask how far the new sensuousness was a desirable reaction against undue ascetism and how far it was mere sensuality. Most fashions in thought have an evil as well as a good side, and the Fifteenth Century Italians may have had more than their share not only of unrestrained lust but also of graver vices—folly, cruelty, pride and treachery. After all, treachery flourishes in revolutionary times as the case of Benedict Arnold and the traitors of our own day remind us. Leonardo Da Vinci's picture of the Smiling Lady, Mona Lisa or La Gioconda, may have something evil in her smile, as if she meant to betray and entrap a victim. Certainly the Papal Rome of Columbus' day, enriched by gifts and taxes from all Western Christendom, was a crying scandal. The Roman harlots were famous for their numbers and their splendor. Few late-medieval Popes were conspicuously spiritual men, and the best that could be said for most of them was that they patronized the arts.

The Discoverer had just turned westward from the Canaries in his first transatlantic voyage when the shameless Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia was elected Pope and took the title of Alexander VI. His evil deeds have indeed been exaggerated by scandal-mongers and other enemies. To give only one example, the story that the Cardinals were unwilling to dine with him for fear of poison seems to have been based only on the fact that at least some of them were fond of good dinners whereas he like many Spaniards was abstemious and set a poor table.

Nevertheless the reality is bad enough. As often happened then, he owed his original promotion to rank favoritism, for he had been made a cardinal by a previous Pope who had been his uncle, and was generally believed to have managed his election to the Chair of St. Peter by bribery—again a habit familiar to the time. He had acknowledged six bastards, all born more than twenty years after he had been made a cardinal. He paraded his mistresses openly. Once

when he went to meet one of them in public the Romans were shocked not by his relations with her but because he wore a little cap which they thought too informal for such an occasion! In his fatherly affection for his bastards, of whom he acknowledged six, he was wholly unscrupulous. In order to endow them richly from the possessions of the Church or of neighboring states he was willing to plunge all Italy into war. Nevertheless he began his pontificate by enforcing better public order in Rome, he employed Michelangelo and Raphael, was himself diligent in administrative business and had a fine voice for singing the Church services but there his merits ended.

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Returning for a moment to our imaginary observer, in Italy he might have heard of a man named Lorenzo Valla, and if he had learned something about the fellow he might, so to speak, have pricked up his ears, for that scapegrace had foreshadowed the future.

Valla had been a priest, a humanist scholar, a loose liver and an assertive individual who was constantly challenging old-fashioned things. He had written well on Latin grammar and had amused himself by making fun of the grammatical errors of the Scholastic philosophers. In a dialogue *On Pleasure*, although he gives his Christian disputant the last word, he obviously puts his real feeling about morals into the mouth of a speaker who defends sexual indulgence, arguing that since nature is good it must be wrong not to satisfy our natural appetites. Among the legends which had grown up around the Faith like parasitic creepers on a tree, there was an often-repeated story that the twelve Apostles had composed our Apostles' Creed in a single session, each of them adding a clause. Valla showed that there was no evidence whatsoever for this fable.

Going further, he exposed the so-called *Donation of Constantine* as a forgery. In the Dark Ages, so scholars of all religious beliefs now agree, a French monk had passed off as genuine a writing of his own which claimed to be a decree by which the first Christian Emperor had given to the Popes the temporal sovereignty of the city and neighborhood of



Rome. Acting no doubt in good faith, the pro-papal party of the day, then engaged in establishing the political independence of the Papacy, had accepted the document and used it to support their policy. A learned German cardinal had already called the *Donation* apocryphal. Valla, however, decisively attacked its genuineness, insisting that so important an event, if real, would almost certainly have been recorded, also that the decree was written neither in Fourth Century Latin nor in accordance with Fourth Century circumstances.

In his *Notes on the Latin Text of the New Testament* Valla went even further. St. Jerome's text, the so-called Vulgate, had long been accepted throughout the Western Church. Scholars had occasionally noted variants and corruptions in this or that manuscript copy, but the Vulgate was revered. Valla on the contrary made fun of its Fourth Century Latin as inferior in style to the golden Latin of Augustus' day. Moreover he emphasized the difficulties arising from the variant readings.

At Valla's proof that an old and revered document might be a forgery and at his comparison of manuscripts a modern scholar would say at once: Here is a man doing typically modern things. Also an average reader today would expect to learn that the contentious humanist had been roughly treated. Nothing of the sort had happened. In Naples he was indeed tried for his religious opinions, but the King who was his patron had forbidden the trial to continue. He may have been whipped around the cloister of a Roman monastery, but that may have been either a penance for his having too warmly disapproved of virginity or because he had forged a Will. He by no means thought himself out of the running for a post at the Papal Court since he formally and penitently applied to Pope Eugenius IV for such a post. Although Eugenius would not employ him, the next Pope, Nicholas V, made him an "Apostolic Secretary," and Nicholas' successor Calixtus III confirmed the appointment.

These last two Popes must indeed have been easygoing as to the opinions and reputations of their servants but this does not necessarily mean that they cared more for elegant Latin than for religion. Nicholas was one of the best Pontiffs

of his century. Both he and Calixtus probably thought humanistic novelties unimportant.

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Nevertheless the papal patronage of such a man as Valla brings up the unanswerable question of how the Renaissance might have developed in an undivided Western Christendom. The glorious European past resurrected by the new arts indeed preached a pagan gospel of splendor which clashed with the ascetic ideal of the Middle Ages. The new learning had given Renaissance men a new power of criticizing medieval ideas. But whether all this could be harmoniously built into a new Christian scheme was not clear. Without the religious revolt which was to come, that which was immature, ungoverned, theatrical and false in the new spirit might in time have been corrected by the general judgment of our race. Tradition and progress might have walked hand in hand into the larger world that was to come, as they had in the Thirteenth Century.

No man of Columbus' day could have foreseen that revolt. As yet neither the universal grumbling against the clergy and especially against the monks, nor the transalpine gloom and the semi-pagan mood of Renaissance Italy indicated in any way an approaching division of the West.

### III. More Beyond

COLUMBUS' discovery of the Americas was a great part of another revolutionary force acting suddenly upon late-medieval Christendom with its ferment of new techniques and Renaissance arts and ideas. Within two long lifetimes three-quarters of the coasts of the world were discovered.

In 1418 Madeira, some six hundred set miles west-south-west of Gibraltar, was rediscovered and colonized. Had a man born in that year reached the age of seventy-five he might have heard of Columbus' return from his first transatlantic voyage. A second man born in 1493, the year of that return, would have been six years old when Vasco da Gama returned from sailing around Africa to India, under thirty when Magellan's ship returned after circumnavigating the globe, and if he had lived to eighty-three he might have learned that Drake had done the same thing after sailing far up the Pacific coast of North America.

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Before the Fifteenth Century Portuguese voyages which inspired Columbus, the history of discovery is one of advances and retreats of which many are imperfectly known. Indeed the earliest human discoveries are not known at all, for in nearly every place where recorded adventurers went they found men already there before them. The Phoenicians knew the Mediterranean, where Homer probably used one of their pilot-books in the *Odyssey*. They traded with Britain and circumnavigated Africa. Coins of Carthage, their great North African colony, have been found in the Azores, more than a thousand miles out in the Atlantic. Greek scientists knew the sphericity of the earth—sea-going men must very soon have realized that its surface is curved from the way objects rise above the horizon. Those scientists also calculated the size of the globe within less than two per cent of the truth. A Greek

sailor made Iceland. The Romans knew the seasonal monsoon winds in the Indian Ocean, and Roman objects have been found as far east as Malaya. In the Dark Ages the first great Moslem rush cut Christendom off from the East but the heathen Scandinavians rediscovered and colonized Iceland where they came upon Irish monks otherwise unknown to history. Beyond Iceland they colonized Greenland. One Scandinavian ship touched at some place on the North American continent which its crew called Vineland, although where that was will probably never be known. If the Wisconsin runic stone be genuine, at least a small party of Norsemen even penetrated far into the interior. In the Thirteenth Century a handful of travelers from Western Europe, most of them missionaries, reached Central Asia, turning the northern flank of the Moslem world by making the interminable journey overland. Several of them even got as far as China. Two brothers, noble Venetian merchants named Polo, twice went to China, lived for some years there, and finally returned with jewels which made them rich. On their second trip one of them took along his son Marco who celebrated the amazing wealth of the Flowery Kingdom in the most famous of medieval travel books.

Later in the Middle Ages, however, the world as known to Europeans shrank again. No more Western men traveled to China, and no more explorers went to North America. The Greenland colony withered away.

Incidentally the end of the Greenland bishopric illustrates the slackness of the pre-Reformation Church. When the last Bishop died in 1537, a prisoner of the Reformers, he and his predecessors for more than a hundred and fifty years had never been near their diocese. All that time they had lived on the endowments of the Greenland mission.

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The next forward push, which has steadily continued until today practically the whole planet has been explored, began soon after 1400. That push was organized and inspired by Henry the Navigator, a Royal Prince of Portugal whose contemporary portrait shows a quiet-looking little man typically Portuguese, but wearing a strange hat like a large, round



turban flattened at the top. He was devout, celibate since he was Grand Master of the rich Portuguese Order of military monks known as the Soldiery of Christ, and also was believed to have died a virgin. We first hear of him in 1415, the year of Agincourt, as a young man of twenty-one fighting well against the Moroccan Moslems—the crusading spirit was still blazing fitfully here and there. At the same time he was sending out a ship to explore the Canary Islands which had been rediscovered and partially conquered by French adventurers in the interest of the Spanish kingdom of Castile. Four years later he went to live on the rocky promontory of Sagres in southern Portugal just east of Cape St. Vincent which is the southeastern corner of Europe, and there until his death in 1460 indulged his passion for encouraging discovery. Although in his later days he seems never to have gone to sea, he spent his large income—increased as it was by the wealth of his Order—on ships and sailors, charts and instruments of navigation. Sagres was a convenient place for ships bound northwest from the Straits of Gibraltar to anchor and wait for a fair wind to run Cape St. Vincent, and often they had to wait for some time there, for the “Portuguese trade-wind” from the north usually blows on all that coast. Accordingly he was able to talk with many wind-bound ship captains who would have been flattered at a Royal invitation to come ashore and discuss seafaring and distant countries. All those years he was constantly urging his own captains to go further and further out.

We can only guess at his motives. Undoubtedly the Portuguese knew from the Moors that southward beyond the Sahara there were well watered lands inhabited by pagan blacks who might be easier to convert than the obstinate Moslems. Rich and idealistic as he was, in the beginning he probably had no idea either of opening up trade with India or of making money anywhere. Later when his operations began to pay he may well have valued his profits merely as means of outfitting further voyages still more generously. He may have thought of combining an attack on Islam by getting in touch with “Prester John,” the fabled King of Christian Abyssinia. At all events he spent the forty-one years of his

mature life in pushing expeditions southward along the Atlantic coast of Africa.

His first success was not coastwise but well out to sea where one of his captains, blown far offshore by an easterly storm, chanced to rediscover Madeira where the Prince founded a colony which soon became prosperous. Another rediscovery still further to the West was that of the Azores which also were colonized.

For a long time progress along the African shore was slow, for that coast is one of the most inhospitable in the world. For a thousand miles the land is desert, growing nothing but camel thorn so that neither food nor fresh water can be had. Also the shore is low, affording no good landfalls by which a seaman can get his bearings. Another danger is the harmattan, the desert wind which comes on suddenly from the East and carries sand storms as dense as fogs hundreds of miles out to sea. From the unnaturally dry air, fine sand and gritty dust cover everything on board, while lips crack and tempers grow irritable as when the desert sirocco or giblee wind blows in the Mediterranean. Old pilot books say that even planking two or three inches thick may shrink and begin to leak under a prolonged harmattan, during which the iron hoops often fly off the casks of liquor. Even today on that coast settlements of white men are few and poor and the natives murderous. Still another difficulty is that voyagers returning towards Europe must work to windward nearly all the way home against the prevailing northeast trade wind.

All told, therefore, Prince Henry's ships, except for their chances of restocking food and water in Madeira or the Canaries, had to be large enough to carry supplies sufficient for a to-and-fro voyage of more than a thousand five hundred sea miles each way, the returning half of it to windward.

Incidentally the only chance of a sheltered harbor in all that coast is in the mouth of the Rio D'Oro which has rocks in the channel and is almost invisible from the sea.

The ships of much earlier times could not have made the returning windward beat. The earliest known to us were rowing craft with a single auxiliary square-sail. Now the radius of action of any craft under oars is small. Her rowers soon tire. If they are numerous enough to drive her at any

speed they need so much food and water that in practice they are useless except for short stretches of coasting work. Square-sails are not very weatherly, especially if like most of the earliest specimens they are loose footed and have no bowlines which are auxiliary sheets led forward from the lower corners of the sail so that it can be somewhat flattened when the wind is forward of the beam, a device invented, it would seem, only in the Sixteenth Century and perhaps in England. As late as 1588 the ships of the Spanish Armada did not have them. Recently found tombstones of Greek-speaking men in the Aegean area between the First and Third Centuries A.D. show that the ancient world was not wholly ignorant of fore-and-aft sails for small craft. There are two instances of spritsails, i.e. rectangular sails held up by a sprit fastened to the mast near the forward lower corner and extending to the after upper corner, and one of a lateen which is a triangular sail hung from a diagonal yard a part of which is forward of the mast although most of it is aft. Ancient fore-and-aft sails, however, seem to have been rare, and not to have been rigged on ships of any size. The first large vessels known to have been propelled by sail alone were Roman grain carriers. St. Paul's ship had two hundred and seventy-six people on board. Surviving representations of these Roman ships show them with high, broad hulls and sail areas very little subdivided. Over their big square mainsails they sometimes spread a triangular "raffee" topsail, and forward they had a smaller square-sail of which the yard was rigged on a spar which might be called either a steeply upward pointing bowsprit or a little foremast raking heavily forward. Such a craft would be hard to handle even with fair winds and good weather. Morison shows a picture of a Roman ship with a short mizzenmast and small square mizzen besides her mainmast and foremast-bowsprit but this rig seems to have been exceptional.

Viking ships and most good-sized early medieval sailing vessels carried only a single square-sail. The Viking craft also used oars, had lovely lines and sailed well off the wind. The captain of a full-size reproduction of one which recently crossed the Atlantic reported that under sail she would point up to within six points of the wind, i.e. three-quarters of a right angle, but that she could not be driven hard into a sea

because so much water came in over her low bulwarks. Also Viking hulls were so shallow that they must have made much sideways drift when close hauled. Early medieval merchantmen did not use oars. Moreover their hulls seem to have been hopelessly tubby; an early Spanish ship model shows a length of hardly more than twice her beam! The only important early medieval improvement in design was the invention of the rudder hinged to the stern-post to replace the steering oars formerly used.

In the sixty years before 1492, however, sailing ships developed more than they had done since the beginnings of Mediterranean record. Hulls were lengthened to three and a half times their breadth or even more. They became three-masters, supplementing their big square mainsails with a square foresail forward and a lateen mizzen aft which helped them point up when going to windward. Square maintopsails and sometimes foretopsails also appeared. In combination with the narrower hulls, the subdivided sail areas had such advantages in handiness, economy of manpower and safety that the improved Venetian cargo carriers could sail twice a year to the eastern Mediterranean and back as against once a year for their one-masted and tubbier predecessors. The Portuguese invented the all-lateen rigged caravel, a light ocean-going type measuring about seventy-five feet overall and perhaps twenty feet beam. Besides her main deck a caravel had a short poop deck under which were cabins for the captain and first officer. Forecastles were too small and low to house the crew who had to sleep on deck or in the smelly hold. Such craft usually carried most of their sail area in their mainsails and a lateen mizzen but the disadvantages of this were offset by their power of going to windward. When the lateen yard is on the lee side of the mast the sail takes the shape of a bird's wing, the most efficient of all forms according to modern experiments. Modern Arab lateeners have made splendid runs and an old author calls their Portuguese predecessors "as swift and quick to fly as if they had oars."

By the Fifteenth Century both floating and "dry card" magnetic compasses working on a pivot had become common; the second sort must already have been mounted in gimbals



in order to give to the ship's movements. Chinese records speak of "foreign" sailors, probably Moslems, who used compasses before A.D. 1100, and they were known in Christendom a hundred years later. Roger Bacon, the Thirteenth Century Oxford Franciscan, showed Brunetto Latini, afterwards Dante's tutor, how they might be used at sea were it not that superstitious sailors would think them bewitched. A Portuguese Prince could overrule any remnants of such nonsense.

Another navigational instrument, the astrolabe, in Greek "star-taker," had been known since the ancient Greeks. It consists of a disk graduated into degrees with a ring to hang it on and a central pivot on which turns a moveable arm with pinholes near each end. When hung up and at rest and when the arm is turned so that the pinholes are aligned on the sun or on a star, then the point at which the upper end of the arm touches the rim of the disk gives the altitude of the heavenly body observed, from which with proper tables latitude can be calculated. A graduated quadrant with a plumb-bob worked on the same principle, but of course on a rolling and pitching ship astrolabe or quadrant observations would be sketchy. Longitude was still a matter of guesswork.

Sea charts called "Portolans" seem to have been known even before the compass. Since time was known by an hour-glass or water-clock, distances out of sight of land could be approximated by "dead reckoning," i.e. knowledge of the direction and of the time run plus an estimate of the speed and the sidewise drift of the ship. In frequented waters a number of reckonings could be averaged up.

Even more than material things Henry contributed perseverance to the drive down the African coast. Thirteen times within nineteen years his captains returned without doubling the low, sandy point of Cape Bojador with its treacherous shoals thrusting far out to sea near latitude twenty-seven and about seven hundred sea miles from Sagres. Only in 1434 a fourteenth expedition at last ran the Cape. Within two years Cape Blanco five hundred miles further on had been approached and a consignment of gold dust and black slaves brought home—it was permissible to enslave Moslems and pagans, and perhaps praiseworthy if the pagans would turn Christian. After an interruption caused by Portuguese

political troubles, the Prince sent out more expeditions. In 1444 the desert coast was left behind, and green, fertile land near the mouth of the Senegal river and on Cape Verde was reached. Eleven years later more gold and some malaguette copper—then almost equally valuable—had been landed in Lisbon, and before Henry's death in 1460 Cape Palmas beyond Sierra Leone had been discovered. Already one captain had taken out an interpreter on the chance of his reaching India.

By this time the Guinea trade was proving so profitable that the Portuguese Kings themselves were promoting it. Settlements were being made and exploration was going forward by leaps and bounds. In 1487 Bartholomew Dias sailed under orders to find Prester John and reach India. Somewhere off what is still occasionally called German Southwest Africa northerly gales drove him southward for thirteen days until he believed that he had reached forty-five degrees of south latitude, although probably he had not been carried so far. When he was able to steer east to make the land none appeared after several days, so he headed north again or perhaps northwest. Anchoring at last in what is now Mossel Bay, he found the coast no longer running north and south but east and west. He had doubled the southernmost part of Africa, and the sea route to the Indies lay open! Short of stores and with his crew tired out he had to turn back but he well knew the great thing he had done.

Making Portugal in December, 1488, after sixteen months out, when he reported to the King he may have noticed among those present a Genoese whom the Portuguese chronicler called Christovão Colon, a talkative fellow who was considered a great boaster.

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The future Discoverer of the Western Hemisphere walks quietly onto the stage of history. Although all his contemporaries called him a Genoese, writers who despised both tradition and common sense long tried to make him either Jewish, Corsican, Majorcan, French, German, English, Greek or Armenian. Only recently has it been proved beyond reasonable doubt that he was born in Genoa, probably be-

tween August and October, 1451, and certainly that he later hoped to reach the Indies by sailing west.

Appropriately enough, he who was to be the first to lead Christian men across the Atlantic was baptized Christopher the Christ-bearer after the immensely popular saint and martyr of that name.

Before he was two, Christendom suffered the disaster of the Turkish conquest of Constantinople which had been for more than a thousand years the capital of the East Roman Empire and the chief city of the Eastern Orthodox Church. There had long been antagonism between the Eastern Orthodox and the Western Christians whom the Easterners called Latins. Some of the points at issue were disciplinary; the Orthodox or Greek Catholics had clung to primitive Christian customs such as the marriage of parish priests and the drinking of the consecrated communion wine by the laity, whereas the Western Church had restricted the communion wine to priests and had forbidden not only monks but all priests to marry. There were also differences as to Church government; the Western Church had become centralized under the Pope who had always been the Primate or senior Bishop of all Christendom, and the Westerners on their own initiative had added "filioque" to the original form of the Nicene Creed, making that Creed say that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father but from the Father "and from the Son." This they had done without sanctioning the change by an Ecumenical Council representing both East and West, whereas the Orthodox East insisted that unity in the true Faith could be preserved only by the verdict of such a Council when that verdict had been accepted by the whole Orthodox-Catholic world.

As a result of these differences the Latin and Greek Churches had long been out of communion with each other, and the Greeks while resisting the Moslems in front had several times been attacked by the Latins in their rear. Thus fighting on two fronts, the East Roman Empire had dwindled to a few Greek-speaking districts, while the Eastern Christians—acting with what friends call heroic constancy and enemies senseless fanaticism—had come to prefer conquest by the Moslems to domination by the West.

The fall of Constantinople was especially a disaster to Genoa, for the Genoese merchants had traded with the East via Black Sea ports reached through the Bosphorus whereas their Venetian rivals traded along more southerly routes. Accordingly young Cristoforo Colombo grew up in a community which strongly felt the desirability of Christian action against the Moslem.

Until after he was twenty he lived in or near Genoa. As we saw in Chapter I he grew up fairly tall, well built and ruddy with thin aquiline nose and red hair which soon turned grey—a common North Italian type. He must have fallen in love with sailing very young, voyaging to the Aegean, to Guinea and to Iceland. Wounded and with his ship sunk under him in a sea fight off Portugal, he swam ashore and between voyages for eight or nine years made his home in that country where many Genoese lived. He learned chart-making, perhaps in partnership with one of his brothers, Bartholomew. He achieved a certain position as the trusted agent of a big Genoese bank, and he married a daughter of an impoverished Portuguese gentlewoman whose late husband had governed an island in the Madeira group. A carved stone window-frame from a house in Funchal which had belonged to that Governor is still shown near there.

To Columbus, however, what he had yet done was only a means to an end, for before he was thirty he had his great idea of sailing westward to the Indies, or rather the idea had him, for it drove him throughout his life.

The notion was believed to be as old as Aristotle seventeen centuries before. It had been known to the ancient Greek geographer Strabo and to Roger Bacon. A few years after the future Discoverer had left Genoa for Portugal, a learned Italian, Toscanelli, full of Marco Polo's book, had revived the scheme in a letter written in answer to one inspired by the King of Portugal.

There are several stories of how the idea reached Columbus—driftwood shaped by human hands on the western shores of the Azores and Madeira, an old pilot who alone survived his comrades and came ashore half dead, Icelandic memories of Vineland, his late father-in-law's charts and nautical papers.



At all events, discovery was in the air of Portugal, and his imagination was fired.

His motives are clearer, especially that of religion. Like Henry the Navigator, he was devout. He faithfully performed his religious duties, loved to say the daily Offices of the Church, spent much time in prayer, had many friends among conscientious priests and monks and himself often wore the brown habit of the Franciscan Order. He hated swearing and blasphemy; at most he would swear "by San Fernando," and when angry with someone he would say only, "may God take you." He never put pen to paper without first writing "Jesus cum Maria sit nobis in via"—"may Jesus and Mary be with us on the way." Moreover he took seriously his baptismal name of Christopher, the Christ-bearer. Columbus thought it his mission to carry Our Lord to countries where the Faith was not known.

Of course there was more in his mind than religion; like most of us, he was no saint. He had heard of the vast riches of the East, and although one of his reasons for desiring gold was that he might finance a crusade—crusading was more than ever talked of since the fall of Constantinople—at the same time he was ambitious. He longed to be a great man, and indeed became one.

He carefully prepared himself by study, for he needed backing, and no one would put money into so novel and risky a venture without taking expert advice. Hence he must be able to meet the experts on their own ground, for which he learned Latin and diligently read the books of the ancient and more recent geographers. Learning of Toscanelli's previous correspondence with Portugal, he wrote to him and received in reply a copy of the Florentine's earlier letter and a chart. The sum of the future Admiral's geographical studies was the worst underestimate of a degree of the earth's circumference known to record. He made it only forty-five miles, three-quarters of its real length. Not content with this, by distorting the findings of his authorities including Toscanelli himself, he reduced the latter's estimate of the distance to Japan by more than a half, placing that island about where the Virgin Islands east of Puerto Rico really are.

Passionately believing in these errors and inconsistencies,

he naturally applied first to John II the intelligent young King of Portugal. That country was foremost both in profitable exploration and in geographical theory. Moreover, he himself was already established and to some extent known there. In case of success he could hope for great rewards, for he had seen a ship captain ennobled for the lesser achievement of discovering the Congo river.

The King was impressed by Columbus' earnestness but of course turned the matter over to a learned committee which debated at great length with the sailor. Its members may have been better geographers than he, and in any case they must have seen his self-contradiction in citing Toscanelli as an authority and at the same time flatly rejecting the latter's calculation. Meanwhile whether the future Discoverer knew it or not, John II licensed two Portuguese to sail on a voyage of discovery westward from the Azores. At the same time during Columbus' years of study and then of inconclusive hearings he seems to have earned no money for living expenses so at last he was about to be jailed for debt. Accordingly, in 1485 he slipped across the border into Spain. His wife had died, leaving a five-year-old son whom he took with him.

The marriage between King Ferdinand of Aragon and the reigning Queen Isabella of Castile had united Spain almost as it is today except for the small Moorish kingdom of Granada in the far south. Isabella who was devout like Columbus was personally impressed by him as King John had been. Through her influence a committee of Spanish experts was appointed and a second series of lengthy hearings and typically Spanish delays began.

After five inconclusive years the Genoese began to think that his chances might be better if he went back to Portugal. Meanwhile the Portuguese expedition which had sailed west from the Azores had returned empty handed; in those latitudes it had proved impossible to buck the prevailing westerlies. Very possibly on account of this failure, when Columbus wrote to King John the latter answered with a cordial invitation to return combined with a guarantee against imprisonment for debt. The future Discoverer therefore went back to Lisbon and was present when Dias landed with the news that

the southern point of Africa had been turned. That settled matters as far as Portugal was concerned. With one route to the Indies assured, King John had no reason to spend money on the doubtful enterprise of looking for a second route by sailing west. The Genoese therefore returned to Spain for the second time.

There he was again disappointed. After no less than seven years from the appointment of the Spanish committee—a record it would seem even for Spanish delays—that body reported unfavorably.

Again Columbus prepared to take his great idea to another country, in this case France, but first he must pick up his son whom he had left to be cared for in a Franciscan Friary at Palos on the marshy shore of southwestern Spain about twenty-five miles from the Portuguese border.

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At Palos his luck turned, for the Franciscan Prior there who had been Queen Isabella's Confessor and had influence with her offered to go to her and urge that the proposed voyage westward to the Indies be reconsidered. She consented, so once more Columbus went to the Spanish Court. He found it near Granada which the Catholic Sovereigns were besieging, and there he witnessed the surrender of the town. He must have been standing under the red stone walls of the Alhambra when in his own words written years later to the Sovereigns: "I saw the royal standards . . . placed on the towers . . . by force of arms, . . . and I saw the Moorish King come forth . . . and kiss your royal hands." Not long afterwards, however, he was definitely dismissed. Again he set out for France—but only a few miles out a messenger overtook him saying that the Queen had again changed her mind. Another confidential adviser had just reproached her with letting slip an enterprise "which could prove of so great service to God and . . . His church, . . . (and) . . . great increase and glory for her . . . crown." She would even pawn her jewels if need were, but this, she was told, would not be required.

One reason why she and her husband had been slow to back Columbus had been that his price was high. Over all territories which he might discover, he was to be hereditary

Admiral—the word, like many others which have been built into the solid Latin structure of the Spanish language, had been originally Moorish and had come to mean a high State official who also possessed what modern lawyers call admiralty jurisdiction. Usually a commander-in-chief of fighting men either afloat or ashore was then called “Captain-General.” To distinguish him from the Admiral of Castile, the Genoese was to be “Admiral of the Ocean Sea.” In his lands he was to be viceroy with the noble title of “Don” and with vast financial and judicial privileges.

His formal audiences with the Sovereigns must have been held in the great square “Hall of the Ambassadors,” the audience-chamber of the newly conquered Alhambra with its thick walls, deep window niches and high ceiling of dark wood set in strange geometrical designs. To reach that Hall he must have passed through the lovely “Court of the Myrtles” with its long, shallow reflecting-pool framed in myrtle hedges and its delicate arcade.

Leaving Granada early in May, 1492, Cristobal Colon, as he now called himself in Spanish fashion, was authorized to demand two caravels to be found and fitted out for a year by the municipality of Palos, and himself to provide a third at royal expense. The two, generally known by the nicknames of *Pinta* and *Niña*, were forthcoming, and when no third caravel could be found he chartered a somewhat larger vessel, a “nao” or “ship” formally called *Santa Maria*. Unlike caravels, “naos” had raised poop decks of about half their length with short stern-castles above that, so that *Santa Maria* probably had bunks for all officers. She was clumsy for exploring, but he made her his flagship because she was the largest of his fleet. The two caravels, on the other hand, were fast and handy, designed it seems for the Guinea trade with its long beat home, *Niña* with the all-lateen rig of Portuguese type, *Pinta* with a lateen mizzen and square main and foresail. This last rig, if not so weatherly as the all-lateen, was nevertheless reasonably so and better in other ways. The somewhat larger and slower *Santa Maria* was rigged like *Pinta* and also had a little square spritsail on her bowsprit and a small square maintopsail.



The industrious marine archaeologists who have studied the famous fleet have all been forced to draw heavily on imagination. The one definite fact about size is that *Niña* rated about sixty tons burden. Morison estimates her and *Pinta* at seventy or seventy-five feet overall, twenty to twenty-five feet beam, and perhaps six feet draft. *Santa Maria's* dimensions are harder to fix.

The three ships' companies totalled eighty-seven, thirty-nine aboard *Santa Maria*, twenty-six on *Pinta* and twenty-two on *Niña*. Except one Portuguese, four Italians including Columbus himself and nine Basques or Galicians from northern Spain, everyone was from Palos or its neighborhood. *Pinta* and *Niña's* captains were brothers of a local seafaring family named Pinzon.

Since the fleet was to explore and not to fight, it was not heavily armed although it had some cannon, muskets and other small arms. Besides provisions for a year, its other cargo was chiefly trinkets for trading with the natives—red caps, glass beads and little bells like those which had served the Portuguese well in dealing with African Negroes. As usual on exploring voyages, there were no priests; systematic attempts at conversion would come later. Toward the end of July everything was ready. By Columbus' order all hands confessed and made their communion before sailing.

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The voyage which was the greatest single step in the intoxicating rush of discoveries would not have succeeded without both skill and luck.

In the first place Columbus rightly decided to drop down to the Canaries before steering west. No one then knew how far off shore the prevailing winds observable on the Atlantic coasts of Europe and Africa might extend but he knew enough to judge that it was hopeless to try to buck the prevailing westerlies which blow as far south as the latitude of the Azores. Had he repeated the error of the two Portuguese who had tried to make westing from those islands he would have failed like them.

The little fleet cleared Palos with the ebb tide in the

morning of August 3. In keeping with the custom of the time and with the crosses painted on their sails, religious observances were a regular part of their daily routine at sea. Columbus himself said his prayers three times a day at the Church's regular hours of tierce, vespers and compline, and some or all of these hours may have been occasions for public prayer by all hands not actively engaged. Certainly an hour after sunset all gathered, said the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Creed, and sang the Salve Regina to Our Lady whose prayers were asked as the special protectress of sailors.

They made the island of Gomera in the Canaries on August 12 after a good run of more than six hundred and fifty sea miles. There Columbus anchored nearly a month. *Pinta's* rudder needed repairs, and he changed *Niña's* rig to one like *Pinta's*.

This was his second correct decision. The trouble with an all-lateener of any size comes when you have to get on the other tack, i.e. when you alter course so that the wind blows from the side which was formerly to leeward. You must then shift the sails with their long yards to what is now the lee side or else they can no longer belly out freely but will be pressed against the mast—a situation tolerable in sailing canoes and small Argentine lateen-rigged yachts but intolerable in larger craft on long voyages. Not only would the loss of power be serious, but also the sail would chafe through against the mast. To change tacks in a vessel with only a lateen mainsail and mizzen like the Fifteenth Century Portuguese caravels or the modern Arab dhows of the East African coast, you must jibe, that is, as seamen used to say, you must "wear." Having lowered and furled your mizzen to simplify matters, if the wind is from your starboard, i.e. your right-hand side, you turn your ship to the left so that first you have the wind dead astern and then on the port quarter. Meanwhile you cannot lower your mainsail because you must keep headway on her or she will not feel the rudder and will refuse to turn. As your stern comes up into the wind you up-end your great mainyard—which is as long or perhaps longer than the ship—vertically along the forward side of the mast, then swing it down again into sailing position on the opposite tack, so that

the peak which has been on the port side of the ship is shifted to the starboard side. At the same moment you must swing your sail around forward of the mast, sheet and all with the sail flapping out ahead like a flag, and sheet home again on the starboard side. You can have no permanent shrouds or stays, all must be let go as the yard comes around and must be made fast again to port when you are on your new course. Meanwhile the mast is supported only by the main halyard, a stout rope which is made fast on deck just forward of the mizzenmast of the Arab dhows.

Anyone who has handled sails in a good breeze will see the many chances of misfortune and even disaster during the maneuver. The sail may split, the parrel or hinged collar which holds the yard to the mast may jam, or the sheet may get away from its handlers. Indeed in a real blow modern Arabs first lower the yard, unbend the sail and bend on a little storm-mainsail, then hoist up again before jibing.

Probably *Niña's* all-lateen rig had been troublesome on the run down wind from Palos, necessitating many repetitions of the dangerous maneuver just described. On the other hand, jibing a square-rigger is easy; you need only "put your helm up," i.e. turn your rudder to leeward, as you run on the original tack, meanwhile swinging your square yards through an angle of some ninety degrees or more. Nothing is apt to get out of hand or be damaged, and if you have sea room you need not hurry. Nor did this end the advantages of *Niña's* new rig. The lateen mizzens of all three of Columbus' vessels could now be furled before jibing, leaving only the square canvas standing. The lateen yards with the furled sails on them could then be easily up-ended aft of the mast and handed around aft without disturbing the shrouds and before setting the sails again. Consequently *Niña's* mizzenmast, like that of the other two, could now be strongly and permanently stayed. Further, modern yachtsmen say that when a square-sail is set on a fore-and-aft rigged vessel in a seaway you feel at once as if you had moved into a boat of double your tonnage, she goes so much more steadily. Also a square-sail set forward tends to lift the bow when running before a strong breeze, unlike fore-and-aft canvas which depresses the bow.

With *Pinta's* rudder ship-shape and *Niña* rerigged, the little fleet cleared Gomera on September 6 and steered due west. Presently the future Admiral's luck took a hand. Ordinarily the northeast trade on which he relied for his fair wind does not blow so far north at that season but for him and his company it did. Day after day it carried them kindly and briskly over the unknown sea. When they first saw the surface covered with the thin film of weed called the Sargasso Sea, sometimes impenetrable to the eye, the crews feared that it meant shoal water, but presently they were encouraged and went on. With time, however, when no land appeared the men began to be frightened. How would they ever get home against winds which were always easterly? Columbus did everything he could think of to encourage them. He was a master of dead reckoning, and one of the reasons why in later years his health broke down was that by day or night when at sea he was continually coming on deck to check the course and speed. On this voyage he kept to himself his real estimate of the distance travelled, telling his subordinates that they had not gone anything like so far. Amusingly enough, the faked reckoning which he showed them was far closer to the truth than the estimate which he thought was true.

Columbus himself was cheerful, enjoying the freshness of the mornings in the trade-wind zone. When the westerly variation of the compass was observed for the first time he managed to persuade his subordinates that the North Star and not the needle had varied, as indeed it was doing daily to a slightly greater extent than today. Toward the last week in September they had variable winds, and once some of them mistakenly thought that they saw land. Then the trades took hold again, and for five days they averaged a hundred and forty-two miles every twenty-four hours of splendid sailing. Again there was trouble with the crews but large flocks of birds encouraged them. The unsuspected variation of the compass was taking them a little to the southward, but that—as Columbus' luck again would have it—was all to the good. Martin Alonzo Pinzon, the Captain of the *Pinta*, thought they must be near Japan and suggested altering course to look for it but the Captain-General would not consent. He himself



was beginning to be anxious at the length of the run but he continued on due west, thinking that this was the shortest course toward land. There was a second imaginary landfall but still the fleet held on.

On October 7 Columbus' luck and good judgment went, as it were, into partnership. With the crews grumbling more and more but not yet actively mutinous, everyone saw large flocks of birds flying toward the southwest. After sunset, therefore, the Captain-General ordered the course changed to west-southwest, i.e. halfway between west and southwest. Had he continued due west by his chart—which was no nearer to reality than the man in the moon—and had he been able to get his subordinates to obey him, his landfall would have been further off by a day's sailing. In the Bahamas he would first have seen either Eleuthera or Great Abaco, and almost certainly he would have followed the Providence Channel westward into the Gulf Stream, which powerful current would have carried him northward along the inhospitable Florida coast. If any of his company had lived to see Spain they would have come back as empty handed as the Portuguese who had tried to make westing from the Azores. Columbus must have realized that after all his chart was sketchy while the providential flight of birds was real. On October 8 they were still accompanied by birds, some of them land species such as ducks and pelicans. "Thanks be to God," Columbus wrote, "the breezes were softer than in April in Seville, so that it is pleasant to be in them; they are so fragrant."

He might still have been checked on the eve of success, for on October 9 or 10, thirty days out from their last sight of the Canaries and now with land less than two hundred miles distant, either the Pinzons or the crew of the *Santa Maria* grumbled again in spite of the many flocks of land birds which were once more seen flying southwest. Columbus seems to have promised to turn back if no land was found within three days.

Somehow all hands felt that land was near, but the future Admiral, unwilling to waste the fine nor'east trade wind that was blowing, disregarded the danger of rocks and shoals and

drove on recklessly through the night of the eleventh. At sunset he had inexplicably returned to his original course due west. Again what luck! About ten o'clock he and certain others on board *Santa Maria* saw an imaginary light forward, but about two o'clock in the morning of October 12 with the full moon high in the southeast and the fleet tearing along at better than seven and a half knots an hour, the lookout on *Pinta* saw a horizontal streak of beach ahead with darker land above it. *Pinta* fired a gun and shortened sail to speak with the flag-ship, and Columbus ordered all sail except the equivalent of a reefed mainsail to be taken in on all three ships. I say "the equivalent" because reef points were not then used. To shorten sail on a Fifteenth Century square-rigger the lower part of the sail—known as a bonnet—could be unlaced as was now done. Under this short canvas the fleet stood to and fro to keep off at a safe distance.

At daylight on October 12 they saw before them the low coral island of San Salvador, about thirteen miles long and then covered not with the wretched scrub which is all that will grow on the wastefully stripped soil of the Bahamas today but with splendid hardwood trees. Jogging to and fro against the nor'east trade-wind must have put them nearer to its southern end, so they sailed around that end and then northward, looking for a suitable place to land. With a good breeze going, no skipper would have been such a fool as to land deliberately on a lee shore when smooth water under the lee of the island was so near. They must have landed on one of the western beaches.

Before going ashore they saw naked natives—at which they were more astonished than modern men would have been, for medieval Christians had no such cult of the sun as we have today but carefully covered their bodies as Moslems still do. Columbus and his Captains landed with banners displayed, they and their boats' crews kneeling and kissing the ground for joy. Their leader, now hailed as Admiral and Viceroy, then took formal possession in the name of the Catholic Sovereigns. The gentle natives flocked around and were delighted with the trifles which the Spaniards gave them. Then or a few days later the explorers, believing that

they were now in the East Indies, began to call the copper-colored folk "Indians."

These Bahamians were not altogether primitive; they practiced a simple agriculture, lived in palm-thatched huts, made good pottery and wove cotton cloth. Some of their dugout canoes made of a single log held forty to fifty men. On the other hand they had only wooden darts for weapons, and were so simple and docile that the Spaniards saw that they could easily be enslaved. Such an idea did not shock our ancestors because, as we saw earlier in this Chapter, it was considered a benefit to non-Christians to absorb them into Christendom on almost any terms. The natives showed the Spaniards by signs that they thought the latter had come from heaven.

The fleet remained at anchor until the afternoon of October 14 while Columbus explored the island and tried to learn from the natives about the region to the westward. His description of the harbor inside the reefs to the northward and of the rocky little promontory on the island's northeast corner shows beyond reasonable doubt that modern San Salvador is indeed the spot where he first landed. At the same time his men, eager for feminine society like all sailors, were undoubtedly delighted to find the local women approachable and the men not jealous.

Presently, however, he must go on to find Marco Polo's Japan or China. All agreed that they must be on the right track because some of the natives had little trinkets of gold.

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We need not follow the Admiral of the Ocean Sea to Cuba, then to Hispaniola where *Santa Maria* was lost on a Haitian reef and finally back to Spain. It will be enough to note that his combination of skill and luck carried him through. When *Niña*, scudding under bare poles before a storm, sighted the rocky cliffs of Portugal he knew where he was but all her sails, except a spare foresail, had been blown to ribbons. Only because that foresail held were they able to claw off and at last to land safely in the Tagus. Suffice it here that before he died religiously in 1506 he knew that he had led the way to vast new regions undreamed of before.

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It would be hard to exaggerate the revolutionary effect of the great rush of discoveries upon the European mind. Although the Portuguese voyages to India immediately produced more wealth, the Admiral of the Ocean Sea and his Spanish successors had done more than find gold. By discovering the Americas they had made the world seem limitless. Western man with his new techniques and his increasing exposure to the arts and ideas of Renaissance Italy was now subject to still another unsettling force, a sensation of infinity here and now.

Some time before 1519 in what is now Belgium a serious, pale young Prince named Charles adopted a new motto. He was short of stature, slim and with an undershot jaw, but he was to be the greatest Sovereign in Christendom. From his father's father Maximilian he would inherit the Hapsburg lands in the Germanies and through Maximilian's wife, the Duchess of Burgundy, the rich Burgundian lands in what is now France, Holland and Belgium. His father Philip, Maximilian's son, had married the heiress of Ferdinand and Isabella who held the Spanish Crowns of Aragon and Castile. Since Ferdinand had made himself King of Naples, the young Prince Charles would also be King there. Probably the pale lad knew that his grandfather Maximilian the Holy Roman Emperor was already planning to have him elected to that splendid although somewhat shadowy title after Maximilian should die.

Some thirty years before Columbus sailed, Castile had taken Gibraltar from the Moors, and the Castilian device had shown the Pillars of Hercules, two columns representing the Rock of Gibraltar and the corresponding mountain which rears up out of the sea on the African side of the Straits, with the motto "Ne Plus Ultra"—"No More Beyond." The implications are clear: the strait is not far from the westernmost points of continental Europe, and the words suggested that there was no one grander than the Castilian Sovereign.

The imagination of young Charles was fired by the discovery of the Americas. He took for his motto "Plus Ultra"—"More Beyond." For him the Pillars of Hercules were no longer a boundary, they were the gateway to a marvelous



New World. Although in his maturity he would combine courage with self-restraint, we might interpret his youthful motto as: "Now there is no limit to what we can do."

The Middle Ages were over, and for others if not for him the vast modern expansion was about to begin with a great and dangerous boast.

#### *IV. Unemployed Diplomat*

EARLY in the Sixteenth Century still another influence was added to the revolutionary forces working against the medieval scheme. Renaissance Italy produced a powerful and timely book.

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Had someone gone to the village of San Casciano south of Florence on an evening late in 1513—seven years after Columbus' death—and had he entered one of the nearby houses, he might have seen an odd sight. A lesser landowner of the neighborhood, an unemployed diplomat with a modest estate, was holding a solitary masquerade.

The diplomat thus described his daily routine: "Since my last misfortune . . . I have not passed twenty days in Florence. . . . I rise with the sun . . . , then go into one of my woods which is being cleared, and stay for several hours, inspecting yesterday's work and spending some time with the woodcutters who always have some troubles to tell me, either of their own or of their neighbors. On leaving the wood I go to a spring and thence to an aviary which is my own . . . (with) . . . a book, . . . either Dante, Petrarch or one of the minor poets, such as Tibullus, Ovid, etc. . . . Then I go to the inn by the roadside, chat with passers-by, ask news of the places from whence they come, . . . and note the different tastes and diverse fancies of mankind. At dinner . . . with my family, I swallow whatever fare this poor little place of mine and my slender patrimony afford. Dinner over, I go back to the inn. There I generally find the host, a butcher, a miller and a couple of brick-makers. I mix with these boors the whole day, playing cards and dice. These games give rise to a thousand quarrels and much . . . bad language. We generally wrangle over the smallest coin, and our shouting can be heard as far

as San Casciano. Surrounded by this vermin my wits grow mouldy and I vent my rage at the malignity of fate."

"At nightfall I return home and go to my study, taking off my muddy country clothes on its threshold. I put on court dress, and thus suitably clothed, I enter the courts of ancient men. Cordially welcomed by them, I am fed the only food that is mine and for which I was born. I am not ashamed to hold discourse with them and to inquire into their motives. They answer me kindly, and for the space of four hours I feel no weariness, remember no trouble, no longer fear poverty, no longer dread death. My whole being is absorbed in them."

He was a slight man of middle height with a small head and dark hair. If a certain bust is a portrait of him he was clean shaven and close cropped with an aquiline nose and thin lips, brilliant eyes and an expression of keen attention. The bust suggests not a forceful or magnetic leader but a cool and accurate analyst with a touch of quizzical, almost kindly, humor. Differently clad, he might have passed for an old-fashioned New Englander.

Such was he whom one of the clearest thinkers of our day, Irving Babbitt, has called the most "Forward-looking" of men, the one who most clearly foresaw the essence of modern history for more than four hundred years after his own day—"the new nationalistic spirit that was destined finally to destroy the religious unity of Medieval Europe."

His name was Niccolo, i.e. Nicholas, Machiavelli, and at the moment he was writing a treatise on government which he called *The Prince*. He knew Michelangelo and may have known Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael.

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Machiavelli's substitution of local patriotism for the ultimate loyalty of religion, together with his complete acceptance of the new morality required by the change, are his sole claims to greatness. He failed in politics and diplomacy. Napoleon said of him that "he wrote of war as a blind man might write about colors," because the Florentine city militia which he had learnedly organized on the model of the Roman Legion was worthless for the simple reason that his militia-men wouldn't fight. Although he preferred republicanism he

begged for employment under the Medicis when that millionaire banking family—the only or almost the only politically successful bankers in history—returned to rule his native city. Incidentally they refused him. His judgment of men was deplorable; he saw a possible redemption of Italy in the tinsel successes of the unscrupulous Cesare Borgia, not realizing that that bastard of Pope Alexander VI had no basis for power except the doting affection of his father and would be promptly snuffed out after Alexander died.

On the other hand, the world does him some injustice when it sees him through a haze of ill fame. To call a scheme “Machiavellian” usually means that it is deceitful and probably treacherous. His first name, Nicholas, has even been used for the devil himself as “Old Nick.” The Seventeenth Century English poet, Samuel Butler, wrote in *Hudibras*:

Nick Machiavel had n'er a trick  
Though he gave his name to our Old Nick,

although the real “Old Nick” was Nyke, an evil water-goblin of Norse mythology whose name long survived in northern England.

The essence of Machiavelli's thought was his intense feeling for the misfortunes of his native country. He had seen Florence humiliated and Italy again and again ravaged by men who seemed to the cultured Italians mere beasts. The twenty-fourth chapter of *The Prince* is called “Why The Princes Of Italy Lost Their States,” while the last chapter is “An Exhortation To Liberate Italy From The Barbarians.”

Italy's riches tempted invasion and her divisions made her weak. The new voyages had not yet appreciably cut into her Eastern trade from which Venice alone enjoyed a greater revenue than that of Sixteenth Century England. At the same time the Italian masses, preserved from invasion for centuries by mere chance, had become unwarlike, fighting their little local wars by intermittently hiring professional soldiers who had no reason for strong loyalty to their employers. Machiavelli exaggerates when he called the battles fought by these mercenaries mere jokes like that of the Central American Revolutionary who is said to have announced in ringing tones: “I say to my armies, fight! But fight not so hard that



any of you are dead." Still the Italian mercenary captains saw to it that their business should be profitable and not too dangerous. In peace as in war the Italians admired skill rather than force even when "skill" became mere treachery.

Suddenly the Peninsula became a battle-ground between Spaniards and Frenchmen fighting each other to maintain hereditary claims of their respective kings to parts of the Peninsula, and incidentally preying upon the Italians. There could be no lasting cooperation between the little Italian "great powers"—the Kingdom of Naples, the Papal States, Florence, Milan and Venice, not to speak of the crazy-quilt of tiny independent or semi-independent lordships in the north and north-center. All of them found themselves dwarfed as the famous Greek city-states had been dwarfed by Macedonia and Rome and as the West European countries are today by the Soviet Union and the United States.

Moreover both Spain and France already had some patriotism and national organization. Their kings could usually count on loyalty from their subjects who were fierce fighters like the Swiss and Germans who could be hired as mercenaries. There were rudimentary but important French and Spanish standing armies. The French excelled in armored cavalry of the old feudal type and in artillery. The Spaniards and Swiss had raised infantry tactics to a higher level than had been seen since the great days of Rome. On every count, therefore, the Italians were helpless.

Sixteenth Century armies were small; about five thousand Spanish troops with two cannon were enough to bring down the Florentine Republic which Machiavelli served. Moreover those armies could seldom be kept long in the field because it cost too much to pay them. The appalling thing was the unspeakable behavior of the invaders. Few of their carnivals of crime affected more than a small area but their cumulative effect was terrific.

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Machiavelli preached his new morals with complete intellectual honesty. What men really do interested him more than what they ought to do. Most medieval treatises on

politics and economics had been heavily salted with moral exhortation, and he seems to have been the first writer to consider statesmanship as an end in itself. He refused to close his eyes to the element of evil in human nature, writing: "Generally men are ungrateful, fickle, false, cowardly and covetous, and as long as you succeed they are yours entirely . . . but when . . . danger approaches they turn against you. . . . Men have less scruple in offending one who is beloved than one who is feared, for love is preserved by obligation which, because of the baseness of mankind, is broken whenever it is advantageous to do so, but fear preserves you by a dread of punishment which never fails." Consequently, although those who govern should wish to be thought merciful rather than cruel, they should know how to be cruel on occasions, as long as they are not hated by their people but keep the mass of the governed united and loyal. Too much mercy invites rebellion and disorder.

In all this he is merely an accurate observer of what theologians have always called original sin. He says, in effect: here is man as he really is, when untouched by Divine Grace.

Much of his writing on expediency is unmoral but by no means immoral. "Let no state believe that it can follow a secure policy, rather let it be thought that all are doubtful . . . but prudence consists of being able to know the nature of the difficulties and in taking the least harmful as good." In another place he teaches a lesson which our own time has conspicuously forgotten—the frequently disastrous results of half measures. "Men ought either to be well treated or crushed, because they can avenge themselves of lighter injuries, of more serious ones they cannot; therefore the injury to be done a man ought to be of such a kind that one does not stand in fear of revenge." What a perfect commentary on the Versailles Treaty of 1919 which neither reconciled the German-speaking peoples to its conditions nor destroyed the political framework of the Prussianized state founded by Bismarck!

Were all of Machiavelli like this, the popular caricature of him as a devil would be due only to the recurring human desires for a devil to worship. His ill-repute is because he goes beyond his realistic view of human nature and legitimate

expediency in an attempt to free those who govern from all moral restraint. He takes for granted that "the object which every man has before him . . ." is . . . "glory and riches." Again: "The wish to acquire"—that is to acquire other people's possessions . . . "is . . . natural and common, and men always do so when they can, and for this they will be praised and not blamed." For him the prevalence of human evil necessitates the deliberate choice of evil means, since "how we really live is so different from how we ought to live that he who abandons what is done for what ought to be done . . . ruins instead of preserving himself."

Accordingly, in enlarging themselves at the expense of others, those who govern should on occasion use any sort of fraud: "Our experience has been that those Princes who have done great things have held good faith of little account, and have known how to circumvent the intellect of men by craft, and in the end have overcome those who have relied upon their word. . . . A Prince ought to choose the fox and the lion because the lion cannot defend himself against snares and the fox cannot defend himself against wolves. . . . Therefore a prudent lord cannot, and ought not to keep faith when such observance may be turned against him, and when the reasons which caused him to pledge his faith no longer exist. If men were entirely good this precept would not hold, but because they are bad and will not keep faith with you, you too are not bound to observe it with them. Nor will a Prince ever lack legitimate reasons to color the non-observance. Endless modern examples could be given, showing how many treaties and engagements have been void and of no effect through the faithlessness of Princes; and he who has best known how to play the fox has best succeeded. But it is necessary to know well how . . . to be a great pretender and dissembler, and men are so simple and so subject to present necessities that he who seeks to deceive will always find someone who will allow himself to be deceived. . . . A Prince, especially a new one, cannot observe all those things for which men are esteemed, being often forced, in order to maintain the state, to act contrary to the Faith, friendship, humanity and religion. Therefore it is necessary for him to have a mind ready to turn as the winds . . . of fortune force it, yet . . . not to diverge from the good if

he can avoid doing so, but if compelled then he must know how to act."

In contrast with belief in the unlimited possibilities of deceit an even more realistic view is Abraham Lincoln's "You can't fool all the people all the time."

The Florentine does not give what is perhaps the strongest argument in favor of the idea that those who govern should act according to a moral code different from that of those who are governed, which is the argument from trusteeship. In other words, those who govern are trustees for the material interests, peace and safety of many others, which interests the governors are not justified in sacrificing or risking even if they were willing to do so. Instead Machiavelli stresses the self-interest of the powerful.

Neither *The Prince* nor the *Discourses* on the Roman historian Livy anywhere suggest that human happiness usually has a better chance under governments generally recognized as legitimate than under usurping or revolutionary rule. That obvious fact is recognized only to the extent of noting that a "new" Prince must usually commit more crimes than one whose authority is familiar. To which we may add that no one, except when driven by ambition, is compelled to make himself into a "new" Prince.

The text of the passage about the faith of Princes has two difficulties both of which bear on the capital point of Machiavelli's view of religion. What he means by "legitimate reasons"—in the Italian "ragioni legittime"—for breaking faith is not clear. Also the words, "the Faith" in the phrase "against the Faith"—"contro alla fede" in the Italian—are omitted in an important early edition of his works which was printed with papal sanction. Presumably "the Faith" would mean specifically the Orthodox Catholic Faith, while "religion" later in the sentence might include any religion.

At all events our diplomat's praise of deceit is connected with his idea of *virtu*. He insists that nothing great can be achieved without it, but by it he meant neither Christian virtue nor the pagan Latin *virtus* in the sense of manly excellence and especially courage. His *virtu* includes not only courage but also ambition and most of all the capacity for fooling others. Nevertheless he was by no means a wholly



irreligious cynic. Although he denounces the temporal power of the Papacy for keeping Italy divided, he does not stop there. He is really angry when he insists that "through the evil example of the Roman Court . . . we Italians . . . have become irreligious and wicked." Also in his *Discourses* he writes: "Those countries which are the nearest neighbors of the Roman Church . . . are less devout than any others; so that any one . . . might well believe its ruin or chastisement to be near." Prophetic words, these last. Also in *The Prince* he says of an ancient tyrant: "It cannot be called talent to slay fellow citizens, deceive friends and be without faith, mercy, religion; such methods may gain empire but not glory." He died with all the Catholic sacraments, and who can say that for him this was only a convention?

He was a man of his time in making fun of monks. It is with the help of an avaricious and hypocritical friar that the young hero of his comedy *Mandragola* succeeds in fooling a silly old man so as to become the lover of the latter's wife.

Still another sign of the time was that Pope Leo X, to show either his contempt for the friars who were the most zealous supporters of papal authority or his indifference towards them, built a theatre expressly for the performance of the play in Rome.

Without wishing to dwell too much upon the miserable story of corruption among the clergy and especially among the Higher Clergy, Leo's patronage of *Mandragola* shows us what had been taken for granted in the Church for at least two full generations before Machiavelli's time. One need only read the works of devout Roman Catholic scholars of our own day—for instance the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Belloc's *How the Reformation Happened* or Dr. Mangan's *Erasmus*—to learn the details of the tragic story. Of the ten Popes who reigned before 1513, only the first Borgia, Calixtus III, can be said to have had anything of holiness about him, and even he had shamelessly advanced his relatives including the future Alexander VI. In this or other ways the lives of nearly all the others had given what would be today grave scandal. Four had acknowledged bastards, Pius II and Innocent VIII two each before they were priests, Julius II three before he was Pope and perhaps before he was a priest. In Chapter II we

have already glanced at Alexander VI. Nearly all had acted too much like worldly Italian Princes. Sixtus IV, the Pope of Machiavelli's boyhood, was a party to the sacrilegious conspiracy of the Pazzi in which one set of Florentine politicians murdered several other politicians in the cathedral itself. Innocent VIII who followed Sixtus had advanced his bastards as a matter of course. Julius II had indeed been a man of grandiose conceptions and the patron of Michelangelo and Raphael but in youth a shameless pluralist and in maturity more an aggressive politician and a soldier than a priest.

Leo X, Giovanni de Medici the uncle of the second Lorenzo de Medici who now dominated Florence and to whom *The Prince* was dedicated had succeeded Julius while Machiavelli was at San Casciano. In their different ways, Alexander and Julius had at least been virile, whereas the new Pope was far from impressive. His weak legs, unwieldy body, fat, puffy face and weak eyes were the outward form of an amiable, pleasure-loving man, fond of amusing himself and easygoing about everything except raising and spending money. He had been made a cardinal at thirteen, and when young had been nominally a canon in three cathedral chapters, the rector of six parishes and the prior or abbot of no less than seventeen monastic houses, enjoying revenues from them all. As for the clergy in general, Dr. Mangan notes that within a century no less than ten general or provincial church councils had found it desirable to issue decrees against the open toleration of priests who kept concubines.

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The unemployed Florentine diplomat added still another unsettling element to the yeasty ferment of the time. With his contempt for legitimate government, he furnished the cynical governing class with a talented defense of aggression by force and fraud.

As yet, however, the grumbling against religious corruption had not boiled over in an effective attack against the Church.

## V. Dutch Scholar "*Lays An Egg*"

OUR scene now changes to an upper room in a tower which still stands in Queens' College of Cambridge University in the foggy midlands of eastern England. There while Machiavelli was writing *The Prince*—indeed for some years both before and after that time—a Dutch scholar was working.

We may call him Dutch although Holland and its language were not yet definitely marked off from the other German-speaking districts, so that contemporaries called him a German. He was an unimpressive looking man in the middle forties, somewhat short of stature, tow-headed with pale blue eyes. He wore a commonplace black cassock like those of secular priests, with nothing to show that he belonged to any monastic order. His voice was weak, his expression almost morbidly sensitive. His frequent smiles could be charming but were often secretive and sometimes malicious. In appearance he was about as unlike a leader of thought as could be imagined. Nevertheless Desiderius Erasmus, as he called himself, already had a European reputation, and was soon to be the foremost man of letters in all the West.

He was strenuously preparing an edition of the New Testament with the Greek and Latin texts in parallel columns and a mass of notes in Latin.

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Erasmus' character, like that of most of us, had its weaknesses, and while he was working at his New Testament his position in life was insecure. He was the bastard of a priest and therefore ineligible, except by dispensation, either to become a priest himself or to hold any benefice, i.e. income-bearing post in the Church. Both his parents had died when he was a child. In early manhood he had become a monk in a House of Augustinian Canons at Steyn near Rotterdam—perhaps taking the vows because only in a monastery could

a poor boy find books and leisure for study. There he had been ordained a priest, but apparently in applying for the necessary dispensation he had concealed the fact that his father had been a priest, which made his own birth not only illegitimate but also technically incestuous in the eyes of the Church. Moreover he detested monastic life, his delicate stomach hating both fish and fasting. He also disliked most of his fellow monks. Accordingly he had taken the first valid excuse for leaving his cloister and was still technically absent without leave if his Superior should enforce the rule.

In his insecurity he was continually telling fibs which were at best white lies. Especially he complained that his guardians had forced him to take his monastic vows when he was still a child, although really he had been at least nineteen years old and probably twenty-two. Even his names were doubtful. He had been baptized Herasmus which meant "Beloved," and had later changed that name of a little-known saint into "Erasmus" which sounded Greek. "Desiderius" he seems to have added himself; it may have been a Latin equivalent for "Beloved."

His physical sensitiveness made him dependent upon what we would call minor physical comforts—a good fire to heat and also to ventilate his room in winter, Burgundian wine, a manservant and horses for himself and his man when he traveled. To pay for these things he was continually toadying to rich people for money, and then complaining that they did not give him enough. His relationship with his patrons was not altogether a one-way street, for as soon as he had become at all famous a letter from him conferred social prestige but even so his position was degrading. He had originally been allowed to leave Steyn because a bishop had asked him to be his Latin secretary, and this kindly man had afterwards made him an allowance during ten years of study at the University of Paris, then the intellectual capital of Christendom. After receiving this bounty, when the Bishop died Erasmus sent several complimentary epitaphs to his executors, and when the latter rewarded him, as he thought, insufficiently, he noted: "In death as in life he was like himself"—in other words stingy!



He was ambitious and had gradually made his way by his learning, his beautiful Latin style and the charm of his witty talk. At first he had been a merely literary humanist despising the "Gothic night" of medievalism which had ruined "good letters." Already a minority of humanists had appeared in the great university, and he had commended himself to them. At first he had been quartered in the College of Montaigu, a charitable foundation for poor students, famous for its emphasis on logic and scholasticism, its strict discipline, bad and insufficient food, bad wine and lice, but after falling ill there he had rented rooms of his own. To pay his expenses he had tutored pupils, one of them, a young English Lord Mountjoy whose family name was Blount or Blunt, invited him to come to England for an eight months' visit where he found himself for the first time in high society. He even met the nine-year-old Prince Henry, afterwards Henry VIII, who was being well tutored. He enjoyed English life with its freedom of manners, especially the custom of being kissed by the ladies when he went visiting in the fine country houses which were beginning to replace the gloomy medieval castles. "With kisses you are greeted and with kisses you depart," he wrote. This, however, was not his only pleasure, for in England he was able to study Greek.

Also his chief friends were the leading English religious reformers, Colet afterwards Dean of St. Paul's in London, Bishop Fisher of Rochester and the lovable Thomas More, all of them men of the humanist "New Learning," zealous for the traditional Faith but determined to purge the official Church of what they considered abuses. There is a story that when he and More first met without knowing each other's names they were so astonished at each other's wit that Erasmus exclaimed, "Either you are More or nobody," to which More answered, "Either you are Erasmus or the devil!" Perhaps through these devout men, this English visit was a turning-point in his life.

Recognition came to him slowly, and for the first eleven years of the new century he wandered about in poverty and in fear of the plague, to Paris, Orleans and Louvain. Of his published works during those years we need note only that they all said that relics and ceremonies are useful only when

they touch the mind and heart of the believer, since the only real religion is personal. Some of his writings sold well but his royalties were never enough to keep him long in funds.

In 1504 in the library of a monastery near Louvain he chanced upon a copy of Valla's *Notes on the New Testament* which fired his imagination. Here was the exciting prospect of going back to the sources of Christian belief. He edited Valla's text and had it republished in Paris with a Preface of his own.

Again he drifted for four years, once making a short visit to England where there had been some talk of giving him a benefice. While there he received a papal dispensation authorizing him to accept such posts in spite of his bastardy, but that dispensation was defective because he had not dared to admit that his father had been a priest. Accordingly he might still be forced to return to Steyn where the Prior would no longer answer his letters.

At the same time he had ceased to wear the distinctive dress of an Augustinian Canon, in most provinces a black robe with a white outer garment—a serious step, usually taken as a violation of monastic vows and therefore another possible count against him. His flimsy pretense for doing so was that in his "habit" he had been taken for an attendant upon sufferers of the plague. Still wandering, at Venice he worked in the famous printing shop of Aldus whose beautiful type he admired as collectors do today.

In 1509 during a visit to Rome where scholars like himself were received kindly, a glowing letter came from Mountjoy; stingy Henry VII was dead, and England under the generous young Henry VIII was now a scholars' paradise. "Without learned men life would hardly be life," the new King had said. Warham the Archbishop of Canterbury had definitely promised Erasmus a benefice. The Rotterdamer hurried to England.

In England he had begun a work which was to make him famous throughout Europe. On his journey he had been planning a book to be called *The Praise of Folly*, in Latin *Stultitia*, in Greek *Moria* from which he made a pun on the name of St. Thomas More. It was written in More's house in what is now the Chelsea quarter of London.

"Folly" then as now had two meanings. It might be stark madness or mere imprudence—among the sculptured virtues and vices beside medieval cathedral doorways the victims of folly can be seen falling into various misfortunes. Also the word had an affectionate sense symbolized by the Court Fool or Jester, a regular member of the households of great men. Jesters wore motley garments covered with little jingling bells and were full of comical antics and makers of jokes ranging between real wit and what we would call slap-stick comedy. Often the Fool or Jester, like Yorick in *Hamlet*, would love his master and would himself be a beloved member of the latter's household. Some years later when Cardinal Wolsey after his fall from favor wished to show his gratitude to Henry VIII for some trifle he sent the King his own Fool, but the poor fellow was so attached to him that he resisted and had to be carried away by force. Also Jesters were privileged characters who could tell their masters unpalatable truths when no one else dared to do so, and even offer wise advice jokingly. The Dutch scholar made his "Folly" a woman or rather a goddess in a Jester's cap and bells—for that matter some women were professional Jesters in real life.

Erasmus began gently, reminding his readers that almost all cheerful, lively and spontaneous human impulses are in a sense folly, and showing off his classical learning in such a way as to offend no one. In the second half of the little work he begins to show his teeth: "The next to be placed among the regiment of fools are such as make a trade of telling or inquiring after incredible stories or miracles and prodigies . . . a good trade . . . (which) brings in a comfortable income to such priests and friars as by this craft get their gain." From this he passes to those who ". . . maintain the cheat of pardons and indulgences . . . compute the time of each soul's residence in purgatory, and assign them a longer or shorter continuance, according as they purchase more or fewer of these paltry pardons and salable exemptions. . . . Thus . . . perjuries, lusts, drunkenness, quarrels, bloodshedding, cheating, treacheries and all sorts of debaucheries . . . (are) . . . all, as it were, bargained for, and a contract made as if the buyer had paid off all arrears, and might now begin upon a new score."

Thereafter, except for short intervals of harmless satire, his *Folly* keeps on striking at what he held to be the corruptions of religion. He is respectful to Our Lady but pays his compliments to those "blind devotees who think it good manners to place the Mother before the Son." How many burn candles to Her, yet how few copy Her chastity, modesty and other virtues! Almost all Christians are wretchedly enslaved to blindness and ignorance, while ". . . the priests . . . blacken the darkness and promote the delusion." Pilgrims travel to Rome or Jerusalem leaving their families without enough to eat.

He next turns to the obvious shortcomings of men who at least claim some sort of greatness or wisdom. Among these his *Folly* gives first place to "Logicians, Sophisters . . . and philosophers," that is of course scholastic philosophers, who "are so purblind as not to be able to see a stone's throw before them, yet . . . sharp-sighted in spying out ideas, universals, . . . quiddities, formalities and a hundred such niceties, so diminutively small that were not their eyes extremely magnifying, all the art of optics could never make them discernible." Next come the theologians, very hot and passionate men who are dangerous to provoke. They consider it easy to demonstrate how in the consecrated Host "accidents may subsist without a subject," i.e. how the substance of the wafer can be transformed into the body of Our Lord although to all the bodily senses it remains a wafer as before. These mighty arguers "knead any text into what shape best suits their interest, like a nose of wax."

His climax, however, is reserved for the monks, friars and Higher Clergy. The monks and friars are "Brain sick fools" who say that they belong to religious Orders, although they take these titles most unjustly, for they have very little religion in them. They are so disliked by other men that the very sight of them is supposed to bring bad luck. Their ignorance, the friar's profitable trade of beggary, the absurd scrupulousness of all the Orders about their gowns will provoke Our Lord at the judgment to denounce them as scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites.

Then after a few side slaps at kings and courtiers come the popes, cardinals and bishops. Instead of feeding their flocks



they "think it sufficient if they can but feed themselves," meanwhile handing over to "inferiors, vicars and curates" those to whom they are supposed to minister in person. St. Francis two hundred years before had said some of the same things, telling his followers that they must first convert the Bishops before they could convert the world, but Erasmus seems to have known little of the Poor Man of Assisi. Amusingly enough in view of his own laxity in dress, he blames some of the German bishops for "omitting their ecclesiastical habit." The Popes, according to the author's *Folly*, get themselves elected by bribery and buy and sell religion while in office. Their pride is such that they will hardly allow sovereign princes to kiss their toe, and they extend their dominions by means of savage and bloody wars.

Here the silly goddess draws breath, saying that she "would not be thought purposely to expose the weaknesses of Popes and Priests, lest I seem to . . . make a satire instead of praising. Nor let anyone imagine that I reflect upon good princes by commenting on bad ones. I did this only . . . to show that no one can lead a comfortable life unless he . . . retain Folly for his friend."

Then after all this ferocity there comes an almost mystical conclusion so serene as to remind us of the mood of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Is not our whole religion, in a worldly sense, a kind of folly? Who but God Himself is truly wise? In both the Old and New Testaments "the sacred text often calls fools innocent and sincere, while the wise man is apt to be a haughty scorner." St. Paul himself writes: "If any man speak as a fool, I am more." Our Lord Himself ". . . delighted in children, women and illiterate fishermen." His words "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" plead ignorance even in favor of His enemies and executioners. Are not the raptures of religious devotion somewhat like that madness which is the very quintessence of folly?

Then at the very end the jesting goddess comes back to earth again, shaking her cap and bells:

Farewell! Live long, drink deep, be jolly,  
Ye most illustrious votaries of folly!

Although some pious folk were shocked by Erasmus' satire,

St. Thomas More, himself the author of the playful and yet perhaps half serious *Utopia*, that is "Nowhere," seems not to have been shocked.

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From More's house Erasmus went to Cambridge where with his New Testament he meant to carry forward his great project of a learned reform of the Church. Taking up the infant art of textual criticism where Valla had left off, he would cut away the excrescences with which pure religion was overgrown. He may have thought that stupidity would dissolve like a mist!

For nearly a thousand years St. Jerome's Latin text, known as the Vulgate, had been accepted throughout the West. A few scholars knew that there had been earlier translations. Some two hundred years before Erasmus' day, Nicholas of Lyra had hoped to correct the text of the Old Testament by comparing various Hebrew manuscripts. Shortly before the Rotterdamer's birth Nicholas V, the first of the two Popes who had appointed Valla as their private secretary, had appointed an Italian scholar, Manetti, to translate the whole Bible into Latin from the original languages, and Manetti had begun to print in parallel columns the oldest Italian version which was known as the Itala, the Vulgate and his own Latin version, but had never finished the work. Also there had been a number of vernacular translations of the New Testament but none of any great reputation. Practically everyone who could read or write had come to think of Holy Scripture in terms of the Vulgate alone. Many of its familiar phrases, hallowed by centuries of repetition, were affectionately known like fixed stars on a clear night at sea. There were a few variant readings but most of these were only unimportant copyists' errors.

Erasmus was far more interested in the New than in the Old Testament. In agreement with Fathers of the Church like Origen and St. Augustine, he held that the account of the creation in the Book of Genesis must be interpreted as an allegory intended to teach the underlying truth of the Fall of Man. If taken literally, certain passages in the Jewish Scriptures are impossible—how could the ark hold all the animals?

And what about Samson? Other passages are without meaning for our day like the Jewish food laws and ritual curses. Still others are pointlessly obscene like the incest of Lot with his daughters, various incidents in the story of David and a number of other anecdotes. He by no means denied the inspiration of the Old Testament; he merely insisted that its "splendid wisdom" must be discovered by understanding it in a figurative sense.

In the New Testament, on the other hand, "all is clear, plain truth . . . nothing smells of superstition and cruelty, but all is simplicity and gentleness" in records dating from the earliest and therefore purest days of the Church, long before any formal definitions had been made by Popes or even Councils—unless we except the Council of Jerusalem which may have been presided over by St. James the Less and is recorded in the Fifteenth Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

The Rotterdamer hated authoritative definitions. The decadent scholasticism of his day had convinced him that persevering attempts at verbal accuracy in spiritual matters were mere fetters upon individual freedom. He did not see the defensive nature of doctrinal definitions, the need to preserve Our Lord's revelation against those who would twist, counterfeit or pervert it. Also one wonders what, at this period of his life, he would have made of Our Lord's promise that the Holy Spirit would be with His followers always to the end of the world?

At the same time he was never the complete rebel. He was physically timid but he was also a genuine lover of moderation. It would be hard to show that at any time he really wished to break with Orthodox Catholicism. He could write: "I like assertions so little that I would easily side with the sceptics wherever that is permitted by the inviolable authority of Holy Scripture and the decrees of the Church."

Nevertheless it was in a mood of hot anger against the abuses and the institutions which he himself personally disliked that he approached his task.

Before settling in Cambridge he seems to have made a new Latin translation of the New Testament from the Greek text. Now he would try to purify the Greek text itself, and

accompany it with a Latin text more conservative than his original Latin version. Some of his notes were only explanatory, others attacked or seemed to attack accepted beliefs and practices.

For instance, there was St. Jerome's "penitentiam agite" in the second verse of the Third Chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel and in other passages. For centuries these words had been understood to mean "do penance," in the sense of sacramental penance. That is, confess your sins to a priest, with at least a spark of genuine sorrow in your own mind at having offended God, be absolved and perform whatever religious act or acts of common honesty your confessor may direct. This was a plain text, familiar to preachers and congregations. Erasmus, however, found "penitentiam agite" an inadequate rendering of the Greek "metanoete." The Greek indeed had this secondary meaning of repentance combined with external marks of sorrow, for which "do penance" would be adequate, but he thought its primary meaning was "to perceive afterwards" or "to change one's mind" and therefore to repent in a general sense not necessarily implying sacramental penance. Accordingly he proposed to substitute either the Latin "resipiscite"—i.e. "come to yourselves," or "be rational again," or "come to your right mind" as Cicero had used the word—or the Latin "ad mentem redite," i.e. "be mindful," or "return to your right mind." This, however, would destroy St. Jerome's familiar text. It could also be taken as diminishing the importance of good works directed by a confessor as penances, or even as an indirect way of arguing against the necessity for confession.

Another change was his treatment of the Greek "logos" in the First Chapter of St. John's Gospel. In the Vulgate this was "verbum"—"the word" of God. Our humanist substituted the Latin "sermo." Now the full meaning of St. John's word "logos" included the creative energy of God, and by analogy with certain verses of the Old Testament Apocrypha it may have meant His Wisdom. It meant also God's rational activity, His power of setting things in right order and distinguishing between them. "Sermo" could indeed stand for rational discourse, but it also had the lesser meaning of the spoken word, i.e. conversation or even a sermon preached in



Church. To reduce St. John's meaning to the "conversation" or the "sermon" of God was deplorable.

Still another rough handling of a text that everyone knew was his proposal to substitute "*gratiosa*," i.e. "gracious lady" or "gracious one," for "*gratia plena*" in the angel's salutation to Our Lady: "Ave Maria *gratia plena*—hail Mary full of grace."

Worse still, he held that certain passages of the Vulgate were later additions to the original texts. Indeed certain modern scholars have followed him in rejecting the last twelve verses of St. Mark's Gospel which speak of Our Lord's appearances after his resurrection, and in St. John's Gospel he struck out the episode of the woman taken in adultery, both of which are certainly part of the Bible as the Church receives it today. In St. John's First Epistle he rejected the seventh verse of the Fifth Chapter, the Trinitarian verse about the "three that bear record in heaven," often called "the Johannine comma," over which so much ink has since been shed.

Also he resurrected various early controversies and suggested new hypotheses of his own as to the authorship and the relations between certain New Testament books. According to him our Greek text of St. Matthew's Gospel was probably a translation from the Hebrew, whereas it is now believed to have been from the Aramaic. Following St. Augustine, Erasmus thought that St. Mark had abridged St. Matthew's text, whereas many modern scholars believe the Second Gospel to have been an original composition originally written in Greek at Rome. He agreed with St. Jerome that St. Clement of Rome had probably written the Epistle to the Hebrews. He even suspected that the heretic Cerinthus had written Revelation! In his opinion the thought of the Epistle to the Ephesians indeed agreed with that of St. Paul's other writings, but he was troubled by the way in which its language and style differed from that of those writings. He found St. James' Epistle lacking in "apostolic majesty."

As to the seventeenth verse of the First Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans "The just shall live by faith," soon afterwards so much debated, he contented himself with comparing the Hebrew and the Alexandrine Greek versions of

the fourth verse of the Second Chapter of the prophet Habakkuk from whom St. Paul was quoting. For him that verse seems to have had little bearing upon doctrine. He denied absolutely that the words "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church," had anything to do with the Papacy—Our Lord, so he insisted, must have been referring only to the faith of the whole Church which St. Peter, a moment before, had definitely expressed for the first time.

He reserved his fiercest language for what he considered moral abuses. As to the celibacy of the clergy, in connection with Our Lord's words about those who "have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake" he wrote: "Among them we include today those who by fraud or fear have been forced into that celibacy in which they are allowed to fornicate but not to marry, so that if they openly keep a concubine they are Christian priests but not if they marry . . . in my opinion parents would be better to castrate their children instead of exposing them uncastrated and against their will to temptation." Similarly he poked fun at those who interpreted the words "a bishop must be . . . the husband of one wife" in the First Epistle to St. Timothy so as to make "wife" mean "church" or even to forbid second marriages. "Today when the many herds of monks and colleges of priests constitute a large proportion of mankind, if anyone will observe how few of them are chaste, how many fall away into various lusts and shamelessly . . . flaunt their vices, he will perhaps prefer that those who cannot be continent should be allowed to marry publicly, . . . purely and sacredly instead of being stained so miserably and basely."

Note now the vast difference between Erasmus' time and our own. Today we would expect anything like such language as his to anger Roman Catholics. Instead we find our humanist dedicating his work to Pope Leo X in words of the servile politeness then customary. Moreover Leo accepted the dedication!

Also the Rotterdamer anticipated and perhaps encouraged the flood of popular translations of the Bible which were soon to be printed in the vernacular languages. In his Introduction to the first edition of his New Testament he wrote:

"I vehemently differ from those . . . who would not have . . . the Holy Scriptures translated into the vulgar tongues, as though Christ's teachings were so difficult as to be understood only by a few theologians, or as if the safety of Christianity lay in ignorance of it."

Now for centuries the official Church had in principle approved of popular Bible reading but had occasionally and temporarily forbidden it in practice because experience had shown that private meetings for this admirable purpose might be mere screens for teaching heretical doctrines. For instance, about two hundred years before Erasmus' time Pope Innocent III had personally discussed the question in a letter to an organized group at Metz in Lorraine. One objection to medieval vernacular translations had been that certain passages were sometimes translated so as to make them sound heretical—an accusation which was not at first made against Erasmus' New Testament.

One wonders what his own views then were. At the moment was he only a cautious and timid heretic? Had he been a little braver, would he have frankly taken what was soon to be the Protestant position that the Bible as interpreted by individuals is the sole religious authority? What did he then think of the corporate authority of the Holy Catholic Church? Certainly he was treating Scripture with individual assertiveness. One of his complaints had even implied that the Church had gone wrong as early as the great Council of Nicaea which gave us most of our Nicene Creed.

On the other hand that complaint deplored the early decisions without denying them. Moreover, with his historic sense Erasmus must have seen that the Bible had not made the Church, which had fully existed before a line of the New Testament had been written. On the contrary, the Church had made the Bible by fixing the New Testament "Canon," the authoritative list which included all those books which she warranted as divinely inspired and excluded a mass of early Christian writings as "Apocryphal," i.e. not sure guides in faith and morals. Whether or not he was ever naive enough to believe that without any authoritative interpreter the Scriptures could interpret themselves, there is no reason to believe that he would have approved of attempts to turn the

Church's own documents against herself. Even as to Our Lord's Real Presence in the Eucharist, his quarrel seems to have been with the terms "substance" and "accidents"—very doubtfully borrowed from Aristotle—in which the Scholastics tried to rationalize the mystery, rather than with the mystery itself. In spite of all his assertiveness he might have been able to say in all sincerity: I believe everything that the church teaches, but do not ask me to agree that this or that Bible text explicitly supports this or that doctrine when I believe that the text in question does not do so.

He may not have imagined how disturbing his ideas might prove to men of temperaments different from his. Probably he had never worked out in his own mind the relation between the authority of the Church's definitions of doctrine and the wording of the Scriptures which the Church herself proclaimed to be divinely inspired. Certainly he himself was more a student of language and a literary critic than a theologian. His worst enemy could not have accused him of being what a Twentieth Century man might have called a "rabble-rouser." Although he had suggested the wholesale distribution of Bible translations in the "vulgar tongue," nevertheless—like any medieval scholar—he had phrased his own audacities only in the learned languages. It was enough for him that the text of Scripture should be purified as far as—in his own opinion!—he could do it. Very possibly he would have said: Here are the earliest Christian documents; the more their true meaning is discussed, the better.

During Erasmus' years in Cambridge most men would have thought his English patrons liberal. Instead when Archbishop Warham, who was customarily strict in forbidding clerical non-residence, made an exception in his favor by allowing him to draw a pension for life as a charge on the revenues of an English parish without the obligation to go near the place, he seems to have taken the favor merely as his due. In 1514, after nearly five years, he determined to return to the Continent, hoping perhaps for still more generous rewards. He now decided to have his great New Testament printed in Bâle which city had joined the Swiss confederation.

Hardly had he crossed the Channel and gone to visit Mountjoy at an English castle near Calais when a kindly



letter from his old friend the Prior at Steyn caught up with him, suggesting rather than commanding him to return there. He refused. His long answer was full of pious sentiments which may well have been sincere—he was always so ready to believe in the righteousness of his own inclinations.

His journey up the Rhine to Bâle was an ovation. The German humanists hailed him as one of themselves, so that he wrote of "my Germany which to my regret and shame I have come to know so late."

The appearance of his great work was still delayed for more than a year, in part by a short visit to England to bring back manuscripts which he had left there. Toward the end of 1515, however, he and his publisher began to fear that they might be "scooped" by the appearance of another translation which had been made in Spain and had been printed some time before but had not yet been published, the so-called "Complutensian Polyglot" Bible on which a group of scholars had labored under the urging of the great Cardinal Ximenes. Consequently the final revision of Erasmus' text was hastily done, and only with a number of misprints did it appear in February, 1516.

In the tolerant and still united Europe of the day only a few ultra-conservative scholars cried out in alarm. In general his work with all its startling novelties was received with a chorus of praise. His English friends, including Bishop Fisher and More—both afterwards to be martyrs for conscience sake under Henry VIII—were delighted. Fisher, himself a fine scholar, wished that the translation had been even freer. Colet wrote: "Some carp . . . but they are men whose praise is blame and whose blame is praise." We have noted the approval of Pope Leo X.

The amiable Pope presently did even more for Erasmus. In January, 1517, after much writing to and fro between the humanist and the Papal Nuncio in London who was his friend, Leo sent a full dispensation which made good the defect in that given by Julius II, i.e. that the great scholar's father had been a priest. Incidentally the friendly Anglo-Italian Bishop who acted as intermediary in Rome made the chronic complaint about the greed of the minor papal officials concerned. In order to complete the formalities, the learned

Dutchman visited England, apparently for the last time, and there in April he was definitely and formally absolved from all irregularities.

He was now in his glory. His secret anxiety, the fear of being dragged back to his monastic prison, which had haunted him for twenty years, was gone forever. What with royalties on his books and certain endowments which the government of his own Netherlands had added to that which he had received in England, he need no longer complain of poverty. Best of all, he had become a sort of monarch of the learned world. People boasted of receiving a letter from him as if they had been awarded a high decoration. He affectedly complained of the number of admiring visitors who thronged to his rooms. For a few short years he had reason to believe himself the central man of his time. Surely his amiable reformation of the Church would presently triumph everywhere. Ignorance would fade away without a struggle, and true religion, washed clean of its superficial corruptions, would shine out in radiant beauty.

In the *Iliad* Homer says of a warrior who was soon to be killed in battle: "Part of his prayer the gods heard, and part they dispersed upon the empty air."

So many men with greater technical resources have since worked at the text of Scripture that for scholars his New Testament has little value. As our own time, at long last, is beginning to react against the excesses of the mumbo-jumbo which the Nineteenth Century called the "Higher Criticism" of the New Testament with its imaginary "sources" and its futile efforts to fix precise dates, it is easy to underestimate both the novelty and the greatness of his work. Although he had denied no dogma of Holy Church, nevertheless with all the prestige of his learning he had fanned the smouldering anger against slackness among the clergy and dullness in the universities. The men of his own day were soon to say that he had "laid an egg."

That egg, however, was soon to be hatched by a very different individual.

## VI. *Miner's Son Approaches Heresy*

THE "egg that Erasmus had laid" was hatched about six months after the happy Rotterdamer had been absolved in England.

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On the eve of All Saints' Day, October 31, 1517, no one would have thought that the little city of Wittenberg, in the northeastern Germanies some twenty-five miles north-nor'east of Leipzig in what was then Electoral Saxony, was about to be the theater of an earth-shaking scene. The region is flat and sandy, and was unhealthy because of the frequent floods of the broad but shallow river Elbe beside which the town stands. A village only a generation before, the place owed its increased size, new buildings and university to the initiative of its ruler, the Elector Frederic of Saxony who was one of the seven Princes who had the hereditary right to elect a new Holy Roman Emperor on the death of the incumbent. His subjects often called him "Frederick the Wise." For about thirty years he had been embellishing Wittenberg as an alternative residence for himself. As yet, however, the town was only locally important.

Wittenberg Castle and Castle Church formed a single block of building, the original design of which seems to have called for a fortified rectangle with round towers at the corners, of which the two western towers had been at least partly completed as planned. Later, however, the defensive scheme had been abandoned. Most of the space between the two towers was occupied by the Electoral residence, but just inside the northern tower the roof-line of this main building was broken by the gabled façade of the church, the main body of which, a plain and undistinguished Gothic structure incapable of serious defense, extended eastward, forming an outlying wing at right angles to the principal front. Frederic had built it to

house his large collection of holy relics, some of them bought by him on a visit to Palestine, whose collective Indulgences were believed to mount to a remission of one thousand four hundred and forty-three years of Purgatory. These relics were annually displayed on All Saints' Day to crowds who came to pray before them.

About noon on this particular day before All Saints' Day, a monk in the black robe of an Augustinian friar accompanied by a single young man went to the door of the church, and tacked up on it a notice of some size. The friar was about thirty-five years old, vigorous and masterful and at the same time fervent and even self-torturing, for the bones of his thin face almost seemed to come through the skin. His expression was intense and his dark eyes so brilliant that some said that they were like those of a lion while to others they were those of a demon. In itself his action was only a part of educational routine, for Dr. Martin Luther was a Professor in the local university founded by the Elector only fourteen years before, and that particular church door was what we would call the University Bulletin Board. His companion was a student who was his academic assistant. Such by-standers as could read Latin if they chanced to look at the notice, may have been a little more interested than usual, for it proposed for academic debate no less than ninety-five "Theses" concerned with the subject of Indulgences, a religious matter which was at the moment stirring up some local discussion.

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This friar was the son of a miner, and few of the great figures of history have so faithfully reflected both their father's character and the atmosphere of his life work. Hans Luther had been a portionless younger son in that poor country. He had had to leave his native village early in life, perhaps merely because of the widespread medieval custom which demanded the emigration of newly married couples when the ownership of the village lands had been subdivided down to what was considered enough to maintain a meager but decent standard of living, but perhaps because he had killed a man. He had chosen the harsh trade of mining, and had followed it with such drive and tenacity that he had made for himself



a modest but definite position in his little world. Throughout life his famous son was to show his father's fierce energy, together with the roughness of speech which so often marks those who burrow in the earth. Indeed the reformer's torrents of foul words would have been better suited to a mining tunnel than to the great affairs with which he himself was to deal. The gloom of a mine gallery also characterized the gross superstition which was to follow him through life; for him the world had no kindly fairies like those seen by St. Joan of Arc but was full of devils seeking his destruction.

Moreover Hans Luther and his wife were both cruel disciplinarians who beat their son heartily even for trivial faults. He could love neither parent.

In his unhappy childhood, however, he must have shown signs of intelligence, for it was determined to educate him. His first school-masters flogged him as his parents had done, but as a poor scholar at the neighboring University of Erfurt he was a Bachelor of Arts at nineteen and a Master of Arts three years later. His father wished him to raise the social status of the family by becoming a lawyer, but after a terrifying experience in a thunderstorm—in which a companion may have been killed by lightning at his side—he insisted on becoming a friar of the Order of Augustinian Hermits which must not be confused with Erasmus' Order of Augustinian Canons.

Incidentally, although the distinction is not always observed, monks and friars were different sorts of religious celibates. In general monks lived in monasteries on endowments or by manual labor while friaries were in towns and friars were engaged in pastoral work and lived on gifts.

As a student Luther had been fond of music and cheerful company but in his friary he threw himself into learning and self-purification with a furious energy like that with which his father had wielded pick and shovel. At twenty-four he had his first theological degree and had begun to teach at Wittenberg. At twenty-nine he was a Doctor of Theology, writing out every lecture and sermon beforehand with typically German accuracy. Yet his vehement self-discipline brought him no happiness. He had always had fits of depression, and from boyhood had thought of God as a stern and

relentless judge—like his own parents. Now he would storm Heaven by force, as it were, throwing all his fiery energy into every pious practice. His self-inflicted physical sufferings went so far beyond the moderate Augustinian rule that his fellow friars found him a strange being, driven by dark forces which they did not feel. Some thought that he was trying to impress them with his austerities. Apparently he confused involuntary impulses to sin with the consent of the will to definitely sinful thoughts and acts. Also he cannot have seen that he was trying to reach an un-Catholic goal, for what he longed for was a degree of spiritual perfection which would make him feel certain that his soul would be saved, while the Church had always taught that to seek a positive assurance of salvation is to commit the central sin of spiritual pride—instead one should humbly trust in God's mercy. For instance St. Joan of Arc had shown both holiness and lucidity of mind in answering her judges' question of whether at the moment she believed herself to be in a state of Grace: "If I am, I pray God to keep me in it. If I am not, I pray Him to bring me to it."

Luther's despair was deepened by study of the writings of William of Occam. That Fourteenth Century Franciscan philosopher had emphasized Will at the expense of Intellect and Reason, maintaining that the chief attribute of God was arbitrary will, and that men by their own free will could perform everything that God requires of them. Thus Occam's writings spurred the unhappy man on his unavailing spiritual struggle.

Incidentally, other ideas of Occam's—his depreciation of the speculative reason which seeks fundamental truths, his belief in a purely human origin of the Papacy and in the duty of civil governments to reform the Church when necessary—were to remain with the future reformer. These things, however, were for the future.

At last the Miner's Son hopelessly concluded that concupiscence is invincible. Now concupiscence has two senses: its narrowed one is desire for the opposite sex, and this necessary appetite which we share with the animals Luther was later to dwell upon considerably. For the theologian, however, the word has also the broader sense of undue self-love, or any attachment to temporary, perishable good things which is so

strong as to trouble our love for God who is our supreme and permanent good. What we know of the future reformer's life makes it probable that at this time when he said that concupiscence is invincible he was thinking chiefly of the general and, as it were, the rarefied sense of the word. Still confusing involuntary and therefore inevitable inclinations to sin with sin itself, he was making shipwreck of his spiritual life upon a reef of petty scruples.

Meanwhile Luther's Superiors gave him kindly sympathy but could not lighten his despairs. The fatherly Augustinian Vicar-General in Saxony was kinder to him than anyone he had yet known, and the younger man loved him for it, but the latter's gloomy spiritual struggles continued.

At last he gradually found some light in his darkness. However deep his dejection, it neither paralyzed his energies nor prevented his achieving a certain local position. Indeed such was his activity and his power of addressing audiences that he was already chosen to preach when still in his twenties, was sent to Rome on business for the German province of his Order, and on receiving his Theological Doctorate he was made a full professor at Wittenberg before he was thirty. Besides his frequent sermons other duties were loaded upon him—administering eleven monasteries as District Vicar, overseeing the buying of fish for fast-days, representing the Order in at least one lawsuit over a parish church, lecturing on St. Paul and making notes on the Psalms. Consequently he complained that he seldom had time to read the canonical hours in his breviary or say his daily Mass.

One wonders whether this neglect of his individual duties in a whirl of external functions was due to inability to organize his time. Or was he beginning to feel that the specific obligations of a priest were unimportant?

At the same time his spiritual terrors began to trouble him less. Long afterwards he said that light had suddenly come to him when reading in the First Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans the words "The just shall live by faith." This he connected with St. Paul's insistence that for Christians the obligations of the Jewish Law might be only "dead works." Also he had been struck by certain passages in St. Augustine which seem to tell against the Orthodox-Catholic doctrine of

free will because they say or can at least be interpreted as saying that only "the elect" will be saved, that is those individuals chosen by God, although no human being can do anything to deserve salvation even to the extent of cooperating with God's grace. All this, he saw, could be reconciled with his idea that no one can rid themselves of sin. God, through Our Lord and without the least merit on the part of the sinner, could throw his own righteousness like a cloak over that sinner so that the latter could be saved by an imputed righteousness. All that the individual need do is to have faith in the sense of confidence in the merits of Christ and he would be saved.

On the face of it this "salvation by faith" was simply Occam's idea of the moral omnipotence of the human will turned inside out, because the entire process was due to God alone. In practice, however, everything depended upon the power of the individual's will to convince himself or herself that they were definitely and irrevocably saved.

Long afterwards the Miner's Son seems to have given different accounts of where and when peace through "salvation by faith" first came to him. One version puts it before his ordination as priest which preceded his coming to Wittenberg in 1508. Another locates it in a tower room there. A third connects it with his trip to Rome in 1510 and 1511. He had tired himself out with visits to Roman churches where Indulgences—a term to which we shall presently return—were granted. His next pious work was to go to the "Scala Santa," the "Holy Stairs" which had been transported from Palestine and were believed to be those which Our Lord had mounted to his trial before Pilate. Pilgrims mounted them on their knees, saying a prayer on each step. According to this account Luther was in the midst of doing this when suddenly he remembered St. Paul's words "The just shall live by faith," whereat he rose and came down.

Whatever we make of all this, one thing is certain. In spite of his vehement, emotional nature, his discovery of salvation by faith caused no violent disturbance in his life. For at least nine years if we accept the pre-Wittenberg date for that discovery and for six years if we prefer the Scala Santa story he attacked no fundamental principle or important practice of



the religion of his day. In a man of his energy and courage this seems so strange that some writers have held that what we know as Lutheran theology was not the force that drove him but was only a "talking point" brought in afterwards in order to justify his attack upon priesthood. Given his boiling temperament, a new idea which really changed his life might well have provoked some great emotional crisis. On the other hand his greatest admirers have never called him a systematic thinker. Consequently, at first he may not have seen the far-reaching implications of "salvation by faith" which in his own mind he made into "salvation by faith *alone*."

At all events he was long content to remain a member of the "advanced party" within the Church of his day. From his first lectures and sermons he had stood for moral reform and for intellectual innovation: he had denounced clerical abuses and called scholastic philosophy crabbed and futile hair-splitting, but there had been nothing startling or original in what he said. Even his violent language had not been exceptional. When he called Aristotle a "damned heathen" and said that the Scholastics in general, including his first master, Occam, were "hog theologians," theologians for swine, he was saying not much more than many Humanists had said. *Ninety-seven Theses against Aristotle* which he had published in September, 1517, seem to have attracted little attention and provoked no recorded reply.

His Biblical studies led him to Erasmus' writings, all of which the Elector Frederic's chaplain had bought for the Wittenberg library. For some years the Miner's Son quoted continually from the Dutch Humanist who was then so much more famous than himself. On the other hand his admiration was qualified. Although he applauded Erasmus' attack upon the ignorance of priests and monks he thought that the Rotterdamer did not sufficiently stress original sin. He first tried an indirect approach, arranging to have his friend the Elector's Chaplain write for him to the Dean of European letters to say that a learned Wittenberg Augustinian of holy life fervently admired the latter's writings and at the same time that this admirer wondered whether the great man fully understood the Epistle to the Romans. Erasmus, then at the height of his fame, seems not to have

answered. In a letter written to a friend in the following spring Luther treated the Dutch Humanist more severely, saying that his respect for the latter "decreases daily," since he feared that with Erasmus "the purely human is of more account than what is divine." Nevertheless Dr. Martin, unwilling to weaken so powerful an ally, ended by saying, "I keep my opinion of him hidden lest I should strengthen his critics. Perhaps the Lord, in His own time, will give him understanding."

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Presently there appeared a particularly scandalous abuse, the Papal Indulgence for the rebuilding of St. Peter's in Rome which Pope Leo X shamelessly granted to young Albert of Hohenzollern, the newly elected Archbishop of Mayence, which office carried with it the dignity of Prince-Bishop and Elector of the Holy Roman Empire.

Indulgences in general had become scandalous because they were so often granted in return for money payments. They had grown out of the Church's immemorial power to forgive or to retain people's sins. After the eternal penalty, the possibility of permanent damnation on account of sin, had been remitted by at least a spark of genuine sorrow for sin plus sacramental confession and absolution, the sinner still had to work off certain temporary penalties, either penances in this life or penitential sufferings in Purgatory, before he was fit for the Beatific Vision of God in Heaven. If logic is to govern in such matters, a greater power of a certain sort must include a lesser power of the same sort. Therefore since the Church had always possessed the power to remit the eternal penalty for sin, as no less than three Gospel texts testified, it was logically asserted that she must also possess the lesser power of remitting the temporary penalties.

There had arisen the idea of the "Treasury of Merits," i.e. that the Church, through the superabundant merits of Our Lord and of Saints who have done more good works than were necessary for their own salvation, has what we might without irreverence call a sort of celestial bank account on which she can draw at will for the benefit of those on earth or in Purgatory. These last could be benefited only by prayer,

but—following an opinion of certain scholastic philosophers which has never been elevated into a doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church—Indulgence preachers taught that the prayers of the Pope were certainly and immediately effective in releasing them from their Purgatorial sufferings. Moreover it was the Pope, and in practice the Papal Court, which profited from the moneys received for “plenary,” i.e. full or complete Indulgences which only the Pope could grant, while local or temporary “pardons” might be granted by lesser religious authorities.

The financial element came in because Indulgences were granted in return for pious acts like making a pilgrimage or giving money for religious purposes. These payments, however, had become confused with the mere purchase of a spiritual benefit. The only partial defense for the Indulgence-sellers is that they were acting in the spirit of a modern church fair. Professor Bainton wittily says that Indulgences “were the bingo of the Sixteenth Century.” Recent Roman Catholic writers, for instance in the articles on “Indulgences” and “Luther” in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, frankly acknowledge that the traffic violated good morals.

Four years before, the same Pope had granted an Indulgence to crusaders in which—after contrition and Sacramental confession of course—he promised them a full remission of all their sins and reconciliation with the Most High. Archbishop Albert’s instructions, modeled on the original Papal Bull for St. Peter’s, no less than three times promised “a full remission of all sins whether the recipient was doing penance in this life or in purgatory.” Buyers could purchase these pardons either for themselves or for others, and those who bought them for others need not themselves have made a good confession so that they were in a state of grace. The final statement of remission of purgatorial penalties said that the beneficiaries would be restored to the state of innocence which baptism had conferred upon them.

The Indulgence-sellers would preach emotional sermons exhorting the people to ransom themselves and their dear ones now in Purgatory. The worst abuses concerned Indulgences for the dead. In the case of “pardons” for the living the papal agents were directed to turn away no one, even if

penniless, provided that the applicant would perform some other pious act. But both the Papal Bulls and the "Instructions" of Archbishop Albert's officials expressly insisted on money payments from those seeking "pardons" for the dead. Although the prevailing theological opinion was that the Church could not promise that souls in Purgatory would be immediately released and the official instructions conformed to this opinion, nevertheless the papal agents are said to have assured the people that as soon as their money chinked in the indulgence-seller's box the soul in question, whether here or in Purgatory, was released from all penalty. A mass of satirical stories also insist that the distinction between eternal and temporary penalties was so blurred that the payment was taken as a license to sin.

Such a traffic had long offended conscience. Chaucer in Fourteenth Century England had written contemptuously of "Pardoners." Villon in Fifteenth Century France had likened them to professional cheats and criminals. Nevertheless the scandal continued.

Although Luther did not know it, the Papal Court had struck a bargain with Archbishop Albert. Like so many others of the Higher Clergy, he had risen merely through family influence, for he was a Hohenzollern and a brother of the reigning Elector of Brandenburg. He needed money for the regular papal taxes on being confirmed in his new office and for dispensations because he was not of full canonical age to be an Archbishop and because he was one of the many Prelates who were "pluralists," that is holders of several bishoprics at once. Accordingly he was secretly offered half the profits of a particular Indulgence if he would sanction the preaching of it in his territories. The Pope was to have the other half for his building fund.

Luther was justly angry. Why should the Pope build a gorgeous new church at the moment when the Turk was pounding on Eastern Christendom? The Miner's Son may have known that Cardinal Ximenes, then Regent in Spain, had forbidden this Indulgence to be preached there, and that certain French bishops had done the same in their dioceses. He knew that attacking Archbishop Albert of Hohenzollern would please his own local Sovereign, the Elector Frederick,



who was the head of the House of Wettin and the rival of the Hohenzollerns. Frederick disliked seeing money leave his territories if he could help it and had forbidden Albert's agents to enter Electoral Saxony. Therefore with the Indulgence-sellers operating just outside his borders he would enjoy seeing their traffic discouraged.

The Augustinian protested moderately and in orthodox terms. Instead of denouncing the Indulgence traffic in a fiery popular sermon in German, by posting his Theses in Latin he merely proposed an academic debate among the learned. He did not commit himself to the opinions he expressed, for in the familiar routine of the universities such a debate was only an intellectual exercise, after which a man was free either to admit himself beaten in argument or to deny that he had ever seriously held the propositions put forward. Although it was impossible to strike at Archbishop Albert without interfering with the revenues of the Pope himself, the Miner's Son's courage was equal to the risk.

He wrote to Archbishop Albert in humble and even servile terms but enclosed the Theses and insisted that he had felt compelled to speak out for fear lest the shameless proceedings of Albert's agents should bring religion into contempt.

The famous ninety-five Theses by no means form a coherent whole. They lead off with Erasmus' point about "poenitentiam agite," insisting that in the mouth of Our Lord this phrase cannot have meant Sacramental confession, which at the same time Dr. Martin pointedly did not condemn. The Pope has neither the will nor the power to remit any penalty except Canonical penances which are cancelled by death. The idea that penances unperformed in this life must be worked off in Purgatory must have grown up "while the Bishops were asleep." He went on to note a whole series of shocking errors of the Indulgence-sellers who deceived people by "indiscriminate and pretentious promises of pardon which cannot be fulfilled." The Pope can only pray for those in Purgatory, and those who say that "the soul flies out of Purgatory as soon as the money chinks in the chest" preach not God but man. "Certainly avarice and gain are fostered when the money chinks, but to answer the prayers of the Church is in God's power alone." "Who knows whether all

those in Purgatory wish to be freed from it, . . . for true contrition seeks and loves purgatorial punishment." Works of charity are better than Indulgences, and only Christians who have more income than is necessary for their families should buy pardons. Christians should be taught that if the Pope knew of the exactions of the Indulgence-sellers he would rather St. Peter's Church were burnt to ashes than have it built with the flesh and bones of his flock. "He who speaks against the truth of Apostolic Indulgences, let him be accursed, but he who opposes the wantonness and license of speech of the Indulgence preachers, let him be blessed." Such scandals will make the laity ask inconvenient questions such as: "Why does not the Pope empty Purgatory as an act of charity in the sense of Christian love? Why does not he, the richest man on earth, build St. Peter's with his own money rather than with that of the poor?" And so on.

Hilaire Belloc has written that eminent Roman Catholic theologians have said "Of Luther's ninety-five Theses . . . almost every one could be defended, or at any rate argued, without peril to orthodoxy."

In the Germanies the *Theses* were greeted with a roar of applause. The old cry for a reformation of the Church in Head and Members was sounded again. Dislike of the clergy, especially the Higher Clergy and most of all the Papal Court, as too rich, lazy and scandalous, was as strong as ever. Powerful laymen perhaps saw the chance of enriching themselves still more by getting hold of the Church's wealth, but probably that strong motive hardly counted until later. Certainly, however, the fees charged for baptisms, marriages, funerals, etc., were resented as excessive. Merchants and master craftsmen disliked the frequent Saints' Days on which their employees were idle. In the universities humanist contempt for the Church's official philosophy, scholasticism, was growing.

Also in the Germanies the peasants had already revolted several times. The lesser gentry, squeezed by the rise in prices, had fallen into what was to them such grinding poverty that they were ready for rebellion. Finally there was the beginning of a national German feeling against the Italians who then as now considered Germans uncultured and boorish.

Thus the German-speaking districts were like an unstable chemical compound in which a comparatively slight shock may start an explosion. Luther's *Theses* provided the shock. The new art of printing helped to spread them; they were promptly printed both in Latin and in German and were widely distributed. Perhaps to his own surprise, he found himself famous.

Archbishop Albert contented himself for the moment with denouncing the Miner's Son and sending a copy of the latter's *Theses* to Rome. At Rome there was no sense of fate. Leo X began by taking the matter lightly. At first he called the *Theses* clever but inspired by envy, then called them the work of a drunken German who would see his errors when sober. The Italian General of the entire Order of Augustinian Friars was merely directed to quiet the Saxon monk.

On the other hand, the Dominican Order, always a vigorous champion of papal powers, angrily entered the controversy. Tetzel the Indulgence-seller whose appearance near the border of Electoral Saxony had set Luther off was a Dominican, so that they had a special interest in defending themselves. Another Dominican known as Prierias, a chief Domestic Theologian to the Pope, dashed off a contemptuous "Dialogue about the Power of the Pope against the Presumptuous Conclusions of Martin Luther" in which—according to the sober wording of the article on "Luther" in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*—" . . . he maintained the absolute supremacy of the Pope in terms not altogether free from exaggeration, especially stretching his theory to an unwarrantable point in dealing with Indulgences."

Meanwhile Luther sent a defense of his *Theses* both to his diocesan bishop and to the Pope, to whom he promised unbounded obedience. At the same time, however, he dealt vigorously with Prierias, disowning the latter's allegedly unlimited papal authority. The decrees of Councils and not those of Popes, so he insisted, were the Church's rule of faith.

Leo X noted the rising tempers of both sides but as yet without concern. In a famous phrase, whose vividness seems to guarantee its genuineness, he said, perhaps with a well bred yawn: "it is only a quarrel between monks." Although

these words may not have influenced Luther, indeed he may never have heard them, none the less one remembers Francis Bacon's words in his Essay "Of Seditions and Troubles": ". . . some witty and sharp speeches which have fallen from Princes have given fire to seditions. Princes . . . need in tender matters and ticklish times to beware what they say, especially in those short speeches which fly abroad like darts and are thought to be shot out of their secret intentions."

The Miner's Son was summoned to Rome as a suspected heretic, but there was as yet no urgency. What with the leisureliness of the Pope's officials, the summons reached him only in August, 1518, nearly eight months after his first move. Routine procedure in such cases gave him sixty days of grace in which to decide what he would do. Luther's move was to urge that he be tried in the Germanies. On this point the Elector backed him out of zeal for the good name of Wittenberg University. Frederic took no position on the merits of the case but merely urged that his popular professor be given a fair trial. Since a learned Italian Cardinal who was also a Papal Legate would be in Augsburg in what is now Bavaria on papal business during the autumn, the Papal Court obligingly suggested that he should hear and judge the Wittenberger there.

Cardinal Cajetan was an Italian nobleman whose tact and personal force had made him a leading papal diplomat. Also he was a scholar who had turned his back on the later and inferior Scholastics and deeply studied St. Thomas Aquinas. He had interested himself in the new Biblical criticism and had encouraged missions in the Spanish colonies.

He had a series of interviews with the Miner's Son in the great palace of the banking family of Fugger, then perhaps the greatest millionaires in Europe with Popes and Emperors among their clients, a varied business empire of their own and a private Newsletter. Incidentally they banked the Pope's profits on Indulgences in the Germanies. The splendid house with its stained-glass windows, marble floors, painted ceilings, costly fittings, armed guards and servants in livery, also the Cardinal himself magnificent in crimson robes, gold chain, secretaries and gentlemen-in-waiting, contrasted vividly with



the friar's sandals and shabby robe. The latter had come on foot according to the Augustinian rule and had an Imperial safe conduct.

Cajetan who was intellectually far above the unauthorized teaching of the Indulgence-sellers raised Dr. Martin when the latter prostrated himself, and caused him to be seated. During three days of discussion, however, he stood on his dignity and demanded complete submission while Luther insisted on discussing his propositions—the Cardinal could not bear his bad manners. He wrote confidentially to Rome: "Quant'una Bestia"—"What an animal!" Once the usually tactful Legate ordered him to go and not come back until he was willing to behave less rudely. On the other hand, ecclesiastical and other dignitaries have sometimes complained of rudeness when unable to answer arguments put to them with a little warmth. Finally Cajetan, judging that Luther, if tried in Germany, would be acquitted of heresy, left Augsburg very early one morning without deigning to notify the Miner's Son. Not knowing of his judge's departure, Dr. Martin wrote out an appeal to the Pope, admitting that he had not been convinced by Thomist arguments, but confessing that he should not have spoken disrespectfully of the Papacy, and promising submission and future silence about Indulgences if his theological opponents would also be silent. On the face of that letter, the whole matter might have remained a mere footnote to history.

Now, however, an obscure happening exasperated matters. Either before starting for Augsburg or, more probably, after he had learned of Cajetan's departure and consequently was on his way homeward, Luther received from his friend the Elector Frederic's Chaplain a document which was seemingly a copy of a papal order to the Cardinal to arrest him and send him to Rome for trial. Since he had been neither condemned nor excommunicated this would have been a shocking violation of Canon Law. The document may have been a forgery or may have been based on a Roman misunderstanding of one of Cajetan's letters. If the Miner's Son had received it some time before he was only now taking it seriously. At all events, without waiting for an answer to his appeal to the Pope he

wrote again to Leo, appealing from him to a General or Ecumenical Council, traditionally the supreme authority for defining points of faith and morals. This was an extreme step, for although the respective powers of Popes and Councils had not yet been defined—indeed papal infallibility was not defined until the Vatican Council of 1870—nevertheless to deny it was certain to displease the considerable party at Rome who already believed the Pope to be as infallible as a Council. Also the appeal stipulated that the future Council must be held in a safe place where Dr. Martin could come and go freely.

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Now that Luther's fame was growing, Erasmus began to recognize and cautiously to encourage him as an effective ally. Even for some time after 1518 the Dutch scholar and the humanists in general mistakenly considered the Miner's Son as merely one of themselves and the whole quarrel as merely a phase of the dispute between good literature and crabbed stupidity. In March the Rotterdamer sent the famous *Theses* to More and Colet in England with a letter which said in part: "The Roman Curia has definitely lost all shame. What is more impudent than these endless indulgences?" Also in another often-quoted letter he said that although Dr. Martin's writings are said to be unequal, nevertheless his life is approved by everyone, and went on to speak of Prierias' "clumsy answer." On hearing that the Wittenberger had been summoned before Cajetan he wrote sympathetically, "I am told that Luther is in danger." That the latter could ever overtop his own fame he could hardly have dreamed.

In November, 1518, that fame rose still higher with the publication of another of Erasmus' works, the *Colloquies* or *Familiar Conversations*, short Latin dialogues intended as a text-book for young scholars. Their themes ranged from gentle satire to a rephrasing of the Rotterdamer's attacks on superstition. As usual, the men of the New Learning admired, while ultra-conservatives and somewhat prudish readers complained. Like the *Folly* and the New Testament, the *Colloquies* promptly became a best-seller.

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While the *Colloquies* had been coming from the press, the Pope at last took Luther's case into his own hands. On receiving Cajetans' report but perhaps in ignorance of the Miner's Son's appeal to a future Council he issued a Bull which had it come earlier might have put an end to the whole matter. The learned Cajetan may have drafted it. It clearly stated the theory of Indulgences but did not mention either St. Peter's or the Wittenberger by name and it frankly admitted that the Indulgence-sellers had committed "errors." In other words Leo publicly rebuked those who were indirectly his own agents. Had this been done earlier and had the Pope also silenced Prierias, Dr. Martin might thenceforward have kept quiet.

In addition to wishing the Saxon Elector to cooperate with him as to Luther, Leo also hoped to influence Frederic the Wise with regard to a most important political matter. The Emperor Maximilian was expected to die shortly, and this would necessitate an Imperial election in which the lazy Medici was deeply interested.

In approaching the Elector Leo played a strong card: he sent a German. The Elector Frederic had long desired a high papal decoration known as the Golden Rose. The Pope now forwarded it to him by the hand of Karl von Miltitz, a Saxon nobleman who had for some time represented Frederic's interests at Rome. Von Miltitz was also empowered to act in the matter of Luther, and was authorized to make generous concessions on all points as long as papal revenues from Indulgences were not diminished. On seeing the situation in the Germanies he judged mild measures advisable. When kindly treated by a fellow countryman, the Wittenberger promised almost a complete submission—his sole condition was that his future silence on the questions in dispute was to be conditional on the Pope's enforcing a corresponding silence on his theological antagonists. His activities had greatly lowered the market for Indulgences, so that already he had some reason to feel satisfied.

Nevertheless one wonders whether early in 1519 the Miner's Son realized that he might soon have to choose between complete submission and the risk of being burned

alive by the civil government after condemnation for heresy by the Church.

"Heresy" was originally a Greek word meaning "a choosing." Orthodoxy must always leave room for many different shades of emphasis as regards Christian teaching; we may compare it with the "eccentrics" on the driving wheel of a moving locomotive which are always changing position relatively to the axle but never fly off from the axle. As Maritain puts it, Luther had firmly grasped certain great and ancient truths too much forgotten around him: confidence in Our Lord, contempt for oneself, the value of the individual conscience as a guide for conduct and the impossibility of human perfection without God's Grace. Would he choose to remain within the wide but definitely bounded circle of Catholic belief?

As to torture, men were then ready either to inflict or endure it to an extent which amazed the Nineteenth Century and still shocks our own revolutionary time. To a brave man like the Miner's Son doubt as to his own wisdom may have been a greater threat.

As to the eternal state of the soul, everyone knew the maxim that "outside of the Church there is no salvation." Some Catholics had made or tried to make exceptions. Dante, for instance, in his *Purgatoria* had written of the excommunicated who had died under the fearful curse of the Church:

"Per lor maledizion si non si perde,  
 "Che non possa tornar l'eterno amore,  
 "Mentre che la speranza ha fior del verde."  
 "Man is not so lost through their curses  
 "That eternal love may not return,  
 "As long as hope puts forth living leaves."

Some had even maintained that at least a handful of the virtuous pagans must in some way have received Divine Grace before Our Lord's coming. There may already have been an inkling of the modern Roman Catholic teaching that "heretics in good faith," i.e. baptized Christians who have been educated in non-Roman Catholic beliefs which they sincerely hold to be true, may belong to the soul of the



Roman Catholic Church although not a part of her visible body. Pope Pius IX in 1854 put it even more broadly, saying that those who do not know the true religion are guiltless in the sight of God insofar as their ignorance is "invincible." Nevertheless from time immemorial Christian unity had been prized above all earthly things, and men in general could hardly conceive that anyone could be a heretic in good faith, least of all a monk and priest like Luther. Was he so sure of his own wisdom and righteousness as to be willing to stake his hope of Heaven on the belief that he alone had rediscovered a pure doctrine from which the whole majestic body of the Church for many centuries had fallen away?

Did the Miner's Son imagine that the Pope and his court would consent to cut their incomes? Did he hope in a Council, in the Elector Frederick or in German opinion? Or did he simply go on step by step, confident that God was speaking to him through his own approving conscience and without trying to see far ahead?

## *VII. Charles, Luther and the Princes*

IN the early months of 1519 Luther had as yet said nothing that was certainly heretical by the standards of the day. Meanwhile the rush of intoxicating novelties was more than ever distracting men's minds. Before the Miner's Son at last defied the corporate authority of the Western Church, a Spanish gentleman-adventurer named Cortes had landed on the coast of Mexico with a handful of followers. Also a little fleet commanded by a former Portuguese subject named Magellan had left Spain in the hope of sailing around the world.

During the coming religious and political crisis Charles of Hapsburg who had chosen "More Beyond" for his Motto and was the Sovereign whom Cortes and Magellan served, was about to sit in judgment upon Luther.

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It is essential to Luther's story to note that throughout 1519 Leo X and the Papal Court were too much occupied with Charles' doings to attend to the Saxon monk. The Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian died in January of that year, and for the next six months Leo was absorbed in trying to prevent Charles' election as Emperor. For centuries the Papacy had worked to preserve its political freedom to act without being threatened by any lay-power. From the papal point of view almost anything was better than the old days when lay-sovereigns, sword in hand, could make and unmake Popes. The machinery of papal taxation against which the Germans were complaining so loudly had originally been built up to strengthen the hands of the Popes in their long struggle against Holy Roman Emperors. Even saintly churchmen might feel that the independence of the Church's Head as a temporal Sovereign was essential to his freedom to act as the spiritual Head of Christendom. In addition, as we have

seen, the worldly Popes of the day were far too much concerned with their position as Italian Princes. At any moment this unworthy political absorption might take precedence over the higher duties of their great office, especially when the Pope had an important family interest at stake. Leo X was a Medici and therefore—with true Italian family loyalty—he would do anything he could to maintain the power of his relations as lords of Florence.

Only four years before, the young King Francis I of France had swooped upon Italy at the head of an army, his men dragging their cannon over so difficult an Alpine pass that their opponents asked whether the French were birds to fly over the mountains. Combining his artillery with his armored horsemen and himself charging at the head of his knights and men-at-arms, he had defeated the famous Swiss infantry at Marignano. He had taken and still held the rich Duchy of Milan to which he had a doubtful hereditary claim. With Italy and the Pope temporarily at his mercy, Leo X had granted him a Concordat which practically vested in the French Crown the right to nominate and elect bishops and abbots in France—a measure of far-reaching effect as the future was to show.

Charles might now become a greater threat to papal independence than Francis. We have noted the Hapsburg Prince's scattered but vast hereditary possessions in Chapter IV. As regent for his insane mother he was also lord of the Spanish West Indies from which an appreciable stream of gold was already flowing to Europe. Moreover in opposition to Francis he had an hereditary claim to the Duchy of Milan, and should he succeed Maximilian the prestige of the Imperial name might help him to make that claim good. With Milan and the Kingdom of Naples which he already held, he would hold both Rome and Medicean Florence in a nutcracker. Consequently the Medici Pope, neglecting for the moment the religious storm signals flying in Germany, did his indolent best at anti-Hapsburg electioneering, meanwhile trying to conceal his action under a torrent of lies typical of Sixteenth Century Italian diplomacy at its worst.

The candidates for Emperor against Charles were Francis I and Henry VIII of England, of whom the serious contender

was Francis. Henry's candidacy was something of a joke. At best he was a "dark horse" in the race who might just possibly get in if the two favorites were deadlocked. On the other hand Francis was a formidable rival. Although too fond of thinking of himself as a hero of chivalric romance and too much absorbed in a succession of mistresses to attend closely to the business of ruling, he was a gallant young man who had already covered himself with glory at Marignano. In the vast sea of scattered Hapsburg possessions, French territory, although not yet rounded out to its present north-east frontier, nevertheless stood out like a huge rock. French wealth, if not as concentrated as that of northern Italy or Flanders, was great—to this day that country possesses much of the best agricultural land in Europe, and until long after the Sixteenth Century agriculture rather than commerce and manufacture was the chief European source of riches. As usual throughout most of their long history, the military spirit of the French people was high. Moreover they had already begun to feel the first unifying influence of national patriotism.

Charles on his side, in addition to Maximilian's previous work for him, had the advantage that the paternal line of his cosmopolitan ancestry was German. The Empire was not all German; it included the Kingdom of Bohemia and other Slavic-speaking states, most of northern Italy and a considerable belt of French-speaking land which is now part of France. Nevertheless it was chiefly German and for centuries almost all Emperors had been German-speaking.

The right to vote for a new Emperor on the death of an old one was the privilege of seven "Electoral Princes": the King of Bohemia, the Archbishops of Cologne, Treves and Mayence who were also the civil rulers of their local states, the Elector Palatine who held territories on both sides of the middle Rhine, the Hohenzollern Margrave of Brandenburg in the northeast and the Elector Frederick of Saxony who was Luther's local Sovereign.

Maximilian before his death had believed that he had lined up all except the last two in favor of his grandson but it now appeared that all seven were willing to take bribes from anyone who would pay. Charles therefore found it



expedient to borrow as much as he could from the Fuggers while Francis' and Henry's agents also spent money lavishly. The twenty-eight-year-old King of England was still in easy financial circumstances; he had not yet run through the treasure piled up by his miserly father Henry VII.

The combination of Francis, Henry VIII and Leo was strong enough to postpone a decision until late in June. Then, however, after the Electors had pocketed the various bribes offered to them, they decided that Francis was too foreign even for the faint feeling of cultural unity in the politically divided and subdivided German-speaking districts of that time. Moreover under a French Emperor Austria and her dependent states might break away. No Elector seems to have taken Henry's candidacy seriously. As a last resort the Pope suggested Frederick of Saxony, but that cautious individual wisely refused an honor which for him would have been an empty one, because an Emperor had no right to levy Imperial taxes or troops. Frederick therefore preferred to keep his comparatively slender resources intact instead of squandering them on the necessary expenses of so grand a title. The Empire faced both internal and external difficulties. Many of its innumerable local sovereigns were bankrupt. Peasant troubles were brewing. The Turk was obviously about to attack. Only a rich Prince, able to get along without new taxes, was desirable. Accordingly at long last the nineteen-year-old Charles was unanimously elected.

During the latter half of the year Pope Leo was more preoccupied than ever. Having failed to keep the young Hapsburg from becoming Emperor, he must now cover his tracks as best he could and try to get into Charles' good graces. Consequently he still had little leisure to attend to affairs in the Germanies. Apparently neither there nor in Rome was any attempt made to quiet the war of words of which Luther was the center.

Throughout the early months of 1519 while Charles' election as Emperor was still in doubt, Doctor Martin's letters are strangely contradictory. At one moment we find him writing to Leo X that he has never sought "to touch or undermine by intrigue the authority of the Roman Church and that of your Holiness." A few days later he substantially

repeats this in a letter to a friend. Next he confesses to the same friend: "Let me whisper in your ear; I rather think the Pope is anti-Christ or his apostle; so wretchedly is Christ corrupted, yes, crucified in his decrees." Erasmus and perhaps other men were similarly swinging to and fro; for instance we find the Dutch scholar saying a little earlier, "I see that the papal monarchy as it is now is a pestilence to Christendom," and afterwards insisting, "not life nor death shall draw me from the communion of the Catholic Church." Nevertheless the Miner's Son's contradictions are peculiarly sharp. Was he trying to deceive others? Did his courage temporarily fail him? Did he doubt as to how much support an open revolt might receive? Or was an uncoordinated rush of ideas carrying him forward to a goal which he did not clearly see?

While Luther was struggling to reconcile his inner conflict about the Papacy and Christian unity, the injudicious zeal of another Wittenberg theologian who was a friend of his brought him into controversy with one of the chief pro-papal German theologians, Johann Eck. Eck was a professor in the University of Ingolstadt in Bavaria, an institution little influenced by Humanism and one in which all graduates had to take a special oath of loyalty to the Pope. Low born like Dr. Martin, he had been a youthful prodigy of learning. He had read the Bible through from cover to cover at the age of ten, at fifteen he could lecture on philosophy for hours and at twenty-four he had become a Doctor of Theology. A few years younger than the future reformer who was now thirty-six, Eck was renowned not only in the German but also in the Italian universities for his vast learning, his amazing memory and especially for his skill in debate. Opponents sometimes called him a drunkard but did not otherwise criticize his habits. A contemporary woodcut which shows him in his Doctor's robes and cap, with a long nose and a melancholy expression, may not do him justice.

From the first publication of Luther's *Theses* the Ingolstadt Professor, like other pro-papal theologians, had held that in questioning papal practice as to Indulgences the Miner's Son was attacking the papal power itself, of which

the issuing of Indulgences was only a part. After much correspondence, violently worded at least on Luther's part, it was agreed early in 1519 that he and Eck should publicly debate papal powers in Leipzig in July. As the time drew near, the Miner's Son, although still somewhat uncertain, decided to take a strong line. He wrote: "God knows what will come of this tragedy. Neither Eck nor I will do ourselves any good. It seems to me to be God's device. . . . Hitherto I was only playing, now at last the Roman Pope and his arrogance will be seriously dealt with."

At Leipzig Duke George of Saxony, whose father had divided the territories of the House of Wettin with the father of Frederick the Wise, presided over the debate, and both he and most of the audience were pro-papal. The two disputants were very different in appearance and manner: Eck heavy, big-chested and square set with a deep but somewhat rough voice, while Dr. Martin had fasted so much that all his bones could be counted through his skin and his voice was clear and penetrating. Further Eck was calm and self-controlled while Dr. Martin easily reached boiling-point and produced much of his effect by his vehement personality. They were not far apart on the theology of Indulgences, and their first clash came over the nature and extent of papal power. Luther began by maintaining that the Papacy was of human and not of divine origin, but Eck, who knew as well as any other scholar that this opinion had never been formally condemned by the Church as a whole, did not press that matter. He may have judged that the hot-tempered Wittenberg Doctor might be lured into some less guarded statement. Accordingly the Ingolstadt Professor brought up the anti-papal teaching of the Bohemian Hussites. Luther may have been rattled by the absence of the sympathetic Wittenberg listeners to whom he was accustomed. He hotly answered that some Hussite doctrines were most Christian and according to the Gospel, so that the Universal Catholic Church cannot condemn them. Since the Reforming Council of Constance which had claimed the right to depose Popes had also burned Huss as a heretic, this was a far-reaching assertion. In addition it was sure to infuriate the audience since within living

memory Hussite raiders had devastated the neighborhood. Coolly, demurely perhaps, Eck pressed his advantage. If the Fathers of Constance who had burned Huss had done so wrongfully, what then did Luther think of the authority of General Councils? Luther had appealed to a future Council against the Pope; did he now claim to interpret the Gospel better than both Popes and Councils? Only a few months before, the Miner's Son had written that Hussites were hateful heretics because they believed neither in Purgatory nor in the intercession of the saints, and most of all because they had broken the unity of the Church, "a thing which no sin or evil could justify." At Eck's taunt he went over the edge, probably shouting with his penetrating voice: "to call me a patron of the condemned Bohemians is a shameless lie. They deliberately broke with the communion of the Church as I have never done, and never will do. But as to the authority of Councils, many of them have erred and contradicted themselves."

Now that last statement was heresy pure and simple. Every educated person present had been taught that a true General Council was infallible when defining the principles of faith and morals. Duke George exclaimed: "Plague take that!" Eck said merely: "If you believe a legitimately assembled Council can err and has erred, then you are to me a heathen and a publican," and closed the debate. Luther returned discouraged to Wittenberg.

This is not the place to discuss what might have been. Dr. Martin probably did not know of the Eastern Orthodox teaching that a Council becomes Ecumenical only when its decrees are subsequently accepted as permanently binding by the whole Church, i.e. by the entire Ecumené or Household of Faith, and in practice by the greater part thereof. Even had he known this, although it would have strengthened his historical case against the Papacy, it would probably not have persuaded his audience. He might have been puzzled by the debates between modern Roman Catholic theologians as to which decrees of this or that General Council, i.e. one to which all bishops of the papal obedience had been summoned by the Pope, have Ecumenical force. He might have embarrassed Eck by forcing the latter to say how far he



accepted the anti-papal decrees either of the earlier Councils recognized by both the Greek and Latin Churches or of the Fifteenth Century Reforming Councils of Constance and Bâle. Instead the Miner's Son was content to accept the familiar medieval phrase, "a legitimately assembled General Council," and then to break with all Christian tradition from the time of Constantine and the Council of Nicaea twelve centuries before by rejecting the final authority of Councils altogether.

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In the early months of 1519, as Luther's name was more and more heard, Erasmus began to find himself in an equivocal position. In his heart the darling of the humanists fully agreed with what the Miner's Son had begun by saying. On the other hand, since he instinctively shrank from violent action, he distrusted Dr. Martin's tumultuous methods. The fierce reaction against those methods was making him somewhat uncomfortable. Already conservative theologians were beginning to say: "Erasmus laid the egg and Luther hatched it." The thin-skinned and self-centered Rotterdamer was in no mood for martyrdom, so that it has been easy for later commentators—in no danger themselves!—to abuse him as a coward. Timid he certainly was, but even at this stage there may have been more in his mind than mere timidity. Already he may have sincerely wondered whether good could come from rousing popular passion against established things. He would have liked to mediate between the contestants.

Whatever his motives, what he did was inglorious enough. He would let Luther and Luther's faction understand that he himself largely agreed with their program. He would even do what he could to see that the Wittenberger had a fair trial. At the same time, however, he would publicly do his best to disassociate himself from the latter even at the cost of deliberate deceit. Above all he would go on believing or at least pretending to himself as long as he could that the whole quarrel was only between conservative stupidity and his beloved study of languages.

Nevertheless he was not yet touched to the quick. His fame was still much greater than Luther's and he could still see

himself as the maker of a new golden age. He was finding it desirable to defend himself in his usual cuttlefish fashion, but the roarings of the Wittenberger might subside and his own scholarly and comparatively tranquil reformation might again go forward.

His crooked course is clearly traced in his letters. In March, 1519, Luther had written to him at length, flattering him to the skies and at the same time trying to enlist him in the Wittenberger's own party: "Erasmus, our glory and our hope, . . . I see from the . . . new edition of . . . one of your books . . . that my ideas are . . . approved by you. I am compelled to acknowledge your noble spirit, which has enriched me and all men, although I write a barbarous style." Perhaps inspired by these words, in April the humanist wrote to the Elector Frederick deploring the ferocious public attacks upon the Wittenberg theologian. The latter, he admitted, had indeed made some enemies at Louvain, but those enemies had been wrong and even wicked in crying heresy when only a learned disputation had been proposed. On the other hand, "everyone praises Luther's life, and it would be more Christian to teach and convince him instead of cursing him." Erasmus says that he has barely glanced at Dr. Martin's writings but hopes that the Elector will "prevent an innocent man from being surrendered under the cloak of piety to the impiety of the few," and continues by presuming to speak for the Pope, writing that the latter has the same desire, ". . . for nothing is dearer to Leo than that innocence shall be protected." Frederick answered that he was delighted to find his distinguished subject's works endorsed by good men. A few months later Erasmus noted: "Luther lives only thanks to the Elector's protection." At the same time, however, the humanist was using his influence with his own publisher in an unsuccessful attempt to keep the latter from publishing the Miner's Son's works!

The Rotterdamer's answer to Luther's letter substantially repeated what he had just written to the Elector: "Dr. Martin's writings have caused great commotions at Louvain where the conservatives have considered them a good excuse for stifling good literature which they look upon with a

deadly hatred. . . . I have declared that you are completely unknown to me who have not yet read your books and therefore neither approve or disapprove anything in them. . . . I keep myself uncompromised, as far as I can, in order to help the revival of learning. Courteous restraint seems to me better than violence: thus Christ conquered the world." To the Wittenberger who felt himself fighting for the soul of Christendom this must have been cold comfort. On the same day Erasmus wrote to an admirer of the uncontrollable Miner's Son: "I hope that . . . you and your party will succeed. The papists here rave violently . . . all the best minds rejoice at Luther's boldness; I am sure he will take care that matters will not end in a quarrel of parties . . . we shall never triumph over false Christians without first destroying the tyranny of the Roman Bishopric and its hangers-on, the Dominicans, Franciscans and Carmelites. But that could not be attempted without a terrible uproar." When he heard that at Leipzig Eck had provoked the Saxon monk into definite heresy there is a story that he said: "I fear lest Martin will die for his honesty, but Eck ought to be called Geck"—the Dutch word for a fool.

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During the last six months of 1519 Leo X, in the intervals of his efforts to placate the newly elected Emperor Charles, took only a single step with regard to Luther. Through Miltitz the Pope threatened the Elector with ecclesiastical penalties against Saxony if the Miner's Son was still protected there. Frederick, however, played for time, answering that neither such penalties nor the excommunication of his learned subject would be lawful before the mediation of one of the German Archbishops selected by Miltitz had first been tried. Only in February, 1520, after this evasive reply had reached the Vatican, was active discussion of the Miner's Son's excommunication begun. Even then the business went slowly, with Cajetan—who knew both the Wittenberg Doctor and the Germanies—advising moderate measures.

How much Luther knew of what was going on at Rome is uncertain. At any rate his mood was hardening. After long

hesitation, he was preparing to broaden his attack against the official Church. Accepting at last the sharp points of the dilemma upon which Eck had forced him, he would no longer be content to denounce abuses; in a series of manifestoes he would strike all along the line against the whole organization of the Church.

How far he realized that even in a purely temporal sense the Church was also the keystone of the whole social order we cannot tell.

With matters in this state, one thing at least was becoming clear: if the Elector Frederick should persist in protecting Dr. Martin, Leo would certainly call upon Charles to take action. What might then be the young Emperor's attitude, and how great would be his power?

Charles' character contradicts the gloomy modern prophets of hereditary doom, for besides his mother's insanity his grandfather Maximilian had been a borderline case between madness and extreme eccentricity while he himself was conspicuously sane, cautious and persevering. Also he took his duties more conscientiously than most Sovereigns of his day. His sweeping motto "More Beyond" was to be his one imaginative self-indulgence.

In early youth his reserved character had made people think him weak and colorless, but already there were signs that this was not so. There is a story that once when he was about fourteen and his counsellors were debating in his presence but without reference to him, he withdrew to one side of the room and began plucking out the feathers of a young falcon which in the fashion of the day he was carrying on his wrist. When at last this strange procedure attracted attention he said quietly: "My lords and gentlemen, you pluck me now as I pluck this hawk, and I can do so safely because the bird is young. But when I am older I will pluck you." In other words, he would take a definite line of his own.

Also, what with his hereditary possessions and his splendid Imperial title, he seemed to incarnate Europe as no Emperor since Charlemagne had done. His hereditary Hapsburg lands with Vienna for their capital extended southward from that old Roman frontier post and southwestward to the present



Swiss frontier. Spain was his, including his grandfather Ferdinand of Aragon's possessions of Sardinia, Sicily and Naples, and the Castilian colonies overseas. As Duke of Burgundy he ruled the present Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg, together with a strip of what is now northern France, including the rich towns of Arras and Cambrai. In the Jura country in what is now eastern France he possessed a district known as the Free County of Burgundy with Besançon for its chief town. All his titles were genuine so that—in contrast to the momentary glory of future upstarts like Napoleon and Hitler—the intense Sixteenth Century loyalty to a legitimate ruler solidified his position. France, as we have seen, was his only formidable rival. England, Venice and the other Christian states were on a smaller scale.

On the other hand his widely scattered possessions were linked together only dynastically with no other bond of union. Born and brought up in what is now Belgium, his boyhood language was French—the jargon-French which people talked in Brussels, says Michelet with typically Parisian scorn. Even in that age when nationalism was only beginning, Spaniards resented his Flemish attendants and advisers. Indeed at the moment his officials were struggling against an annoying revolt in Castile. Similarly, as we shall see in the next chapter, the Germans would dislike the Spaniards whom he was about to bring with him into their country. It would have been difficult for a political genius to get his ill-assorted states to pull together in harness, and Charles was not a genius.

Moreover he had inherited a quarrel with France, whose King Francis I had already been his rival for the Imperial title. The Burgundian dynasty which had built up a powerful and practically independent state out of districts on both sides of the boundary between northeastern France and the Empire had originally been a younger branch of the Royal House of France, to which a French king had given the rich Duchy of Burgundy. To this Charles' ancestors had added their other possessions, but the French Crown had taken back the original Duchy from his grandmother. The young Emperor naturally thought this seizure unjust and considered that the French were unlawfully holding land which

should be his. Further, now that he was Emperor, he must face the fact that Francis was occupying the Duchy of Milan which was part of the Empire.

Finally Charles' title of Holy Roman Emperor, although in point of precedence it made him the first layman in Europe, gave him little real authority over the vast area which he nominally ruled. In fact the Empire was a crazy-quilt of practically independent local sovereignties with only a shadow of central government. There is truth in the familiar epigram that it was neither Holy, Roman nor an Empire. Its nominal head was only the President of a loose confederation with the right to summon the Assembly called the Germanic Diet. This quasi-parliamentary body could vote money and troops or condemn people to the "ban" of the Empire which was a kind of secular excommunication, but even the Emperor and the Diet together had no regular means of enforcing their decrees. The Diet had three separate Houses, the first of which was composed of the six German-speaking Electors without the King of Bohemia who voted only when a new Emperor was to be chosen. The second House was a much more numerous body composed of the Princes who were local rulers but not Electors, and only after the Electors and Princes had agreed was any measure submitted to the third House composed of deputies from the Imperial Free Cities, most of them governed by their richer citizens. In practice any powerful German Prince could usually do what he liked in his own territory.

In any case, before Luther's case could be discussed Charles must first get himself crowned Emperor in Charlemagne's church at Aix-la-Chapelle, and must then summon his first Diet. All this would take time.

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In July, 1519, as the Leipzig debate adjourned, two of the young Emperor's subjects were engaged upon most striking episodes in Western history. Near the coast of the Gulf of Mexico some twenty miles north of the present city of Vera Cruz a tiny Spanish armed force of less than seven hundred men under Cortes was preparing to march for Mexico City

over ground never before trodden by a European foot. In Seville Magellan with a fleet of five Spanish ships, one of which would be the first to circumnavigate the globe, was almost ready to drop down the river to the sea. The expansion of the known world—perhaps the strongest of the many forces which were unsettling men's minds—was rushing forward at breakneck speed.

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In Rome Cajetan continued to warn against severity toward Luther, but in April, 1520, the arrival of Eck with Latin translations of some of the Miner's Son's German writings determined Leo and his advisers to excommunicate the troublesome friar. Still there was no haste. The Bull of Excommunication was finally signed only on June 15 by Pope Leo at a country place where he was boar hunting—probably his "hunting" was done standing or even sitting in some safe place and shooting with a crossbow at game which was being driven across in front of him by beaters, an amusement common among great people at the time.

In the late summer, before the Bull reached the Germanies, Luther scored a popular success there with a general attack against tradition in a pamphlet called *An Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*. This was not in Latin as the *Theses* had originally been, but in German so as to appeal to a wider audience. It was quickly followed by another pamphlet on *The Babylonish Captivity of the Church* and one on *The Liberty of a Christian Man*—this last sarcastically dedicated to the "Honorable and Good" Leo himself. Both of them were first written in Latin and promptly translated into German. All three violently accused the official Church of greed and hypocrisy, especially the Pope and his Court.

The leading idea of these pamphlets was to get rid of priesthood or, as its enemies used to call it, "priestcraft." Indulgences are "a mere imposture of the Pope's flatterers." The only rule of faith is the Bible which is divinely inspired in the literal sense of every word. Since the Church herself had always insisted that the Bible was inspired—although of

course without specifying too narrowly the meaning of "inspiration"—her officers could not wholly reject an appeal to Scripture. In fact it had always been a familiar move of heretics to appeal against her in the name of their individual interpretations of particular texts. As early as A.D. 200, when elderly Christians could remember having talked in their youth with those who could themselves remember old people of the apostolic generation itself, Tertullian had noted this heretical practice. Against it the Church had always insisted that the interpretation of the Scriptures rightly belongs not to individual believers but to herself—the corporate body which made the New Testament and continues to understand the Scriptures in accordance with the Faith as taught by the Apostles and everywhere preserved in the local churches, whose first bishops were either Apostles or men consecrated by them. How slippery a foundation the individual interpretations of the Bible were to be, the future was to show.

The Miner's Son himself would soon detest the sand-storm of individualism which his action would presently set in motion. Moreover not only he but also the whole first generation of reformers would maintain that no lasting fragmentation of Christendom would result from their teaching. In the teeth of the facts they would persist in the astonishing belief that unity would be preserved because in the long run the Holy Spirit would guide individual believers to interpret the Scriptures correctly!

In contradiction with all that we historically know about the earliest Christian centuries, the program set forth in Luther's three pamphlets would have swept away the whole organization of the visible Church here on earth. For him the only true Church was the invisible Church composed of those who have been or are to be saved. He grants to the Church on earth only the power of preaching and of distinguishing between the Word of God and that of man, i.e. between true Scripture and false. All believers are priests and may either celebrate the Eucharist or confess and absolve others in the sacrament of penance if they choose. Indeed penance may not be a sacrament. Holy Orders, Confirmation, Marriage and Extreme Unction are not sacraments at all. Masses for the dead should be abolished, since there is no



Purgatory, and all souls go either to Hell or immediately to Heaven after death. Indeed, since Mass is not a sacrifice but a promise of Grace, it should not be said for any "special intention." Human nature has been so completely corrupted by original sin that men's good works cannot help toward salvation, which must be the result of Divine Grace alone without the slightest cooperation on our part. Man has no free will except—by an unacknowledged inconsistency—when he convinces himself by faith in the sense of confidence that God has saved him.

As to the corporate right of the Church and especially the Pope to interpret the Scriptures, the *Address to the German Nobility* maintained that since God had once spoken by the mouth of Balaam's ass against that prophet, why should not he speak again by the mouth of a pious man against the Pope?

As to the future Council to which the Miner's Son had appealed, the *Address* goes further than the original appeal of November 1518. The Pope's sole right to call Councils is based upon no scriptural passage but only upon laws made by the Popes themselves. When the Pope scandalizes all Christendom, the Emperor or any other Christian who has the power to do so, relying on the universal priesthood of all believers, should call a "Free Council" in order to excommunicate and drive out the scandalous Pope if that be possible. The phrase "A Free Council" was to have a considerable future.

Besides these main points a number of subordinate issues are brought in. The wife of an impotent husband should be allowed to cohabit with another man under certain conditions. Charles V should forbid anyone to say that the Church has rights over the State but not vice versa, or that only the Pope can call a General Council. The young Prince should forbid both legal appeals to Rome and the payment of certain papal taxes which were thought particularly oppressive. He should abolish Saints' Days and other holidays, i.e. Holy Days, except Sundays, on the ground that they lead to drunkenness, gambling and idleness—annually there may have been as many as eighty in most parts of Western Europe. As if all these various tasks were not enough, Charles should

also put down begging, brothels, most of the teaching of Aristotle and "the traffic in annuities" which was a way of getting around the prohibition of usury. As an inducement to undertake these considerable tasks, he should confiscate all Church property for his own use.

We may pause for a moment over the word usury, to which Luther afterwards returned at more length. To us it means excessive interest on loans, but it then had the very different meaning of unearned interest. When a loan was made for the purpose of producing new wealth, for making money as we would say today, then the lender was permitted to stipulate for a part of the profit when and if earned. If, on the other hand, the loan was for an economically unproductive purpose such as waging a war, building a Church or relieving the necessities of someone too old to work, then the lender was not morally entitled to anything more than the return of the principal. Usually the State backed up the Church by making any clear case of unearned interest a crime. In practice there were of course many borderline cases, and with the late-medieval development of commerce moralists tended to increase the sphere within which legitimate profits might be taken in return for extending credit. The whole subject was morally and emotionally connected with the Church's denunciation of the excessive love of wealth as the deadly sin of avarice, and with the universal medieval desire to prevent the concentration of wealth in a few hands.

The Miner's Son, with his keen perception of immediate things, was eloquent in denouncing the increasing use of credit in personal affairs and the extravagant luxuries made possible thereby. "Buying on credit," said he, "is the greatest curse of the Germans, without which many would have to go without silks, velvet, spices and other luxuries. This buying on credit is a sign and token that the world is sold to the devil by many sins, which must ruin us both spiritually and temporally."

Indeed Luther's economic morality, religious revolutionary though he was, sometimes harked back to the errors of certain theologians of the Dark Ages who doubted whether any business man, as we would say, could escape Hell. Whatever else can be charged against the Wittenberg Doctor, at least

he would gladly have closed the door against the swollen growth of almost universal indebtedness under which we struggle today. In this his heart was wiser than his head. The late-medieval moralists whom he denounced for trying to distinguish between productive and unproductive credit saw more clearly than he.

For the moment, however, the effect of the Miner's Son's eloquence was tremendous. He poured out his soul in a torrent of white-hot words. For instance the dedication of *The Liberty of a Christian Man* calls the Roman Court "more scandalous, wicked and shameful than any Sodom." In the Germanies the various smouldering discontents of the time, the resentment against lazy monks, excessive clerical wealth and clerical taxes, the Humanists' hatred of close scholastic reasoning, all these began to blaze.

As we saw in Chapter VI in the case of Erasmus, today an attack from within the Roman Catholic Church against papal practice, even if much less violent than Luther's three pamphlets, would at once cut off the assailant from the sympathy of all those who proposed to remain in communion with her. It is so fatal to true history to interpret the past in terms of the present that once more we must carefully note how differently people then felt. A number of devout and faithful Catholics—some of them later known as the "Spirituals"—were willing to go to great lengths in opposing men like Prierias who were trying to make the successor of St. Peter, the humble Galilean fisherman, into a typical Sixteenth Century tyrant over the Church.

To quote *Reginald Pole* by W. Schenk: "The Fifteenth Century Conciliar Movement had failed to provide a constitutional basis for the Church, and the worldly Renaissance Popes were making good use of the contemporary tendency toward absolute monarchy—absolute in relation not only to constitutional control but also as to the moral law itself. . . . Some canonists exalted the papal fullness of power so far that in their teaching the Pope's will tended to become the sole criterion of law."

The leader of the "Spirituals" was a citizen of the aristocratic Venetian Republic, Gasparo Contarini, noble both in social rank and in character, a humanist and afterwards a

Cardinal. A conspicuously loyal son of the Church, he and his friends had been zealous for reforming the morals of the clergy long before Luther's outburst. To quote Schenk again, a few years later when Contarini was serving as Venetian Ambassador to Leo's cousin Pope Clement VII he "explicitly attacked the theory of papal absolutism. Papal rule, he held, like any other form of authority, must be rational because it is exercised over rational beings. To ascribe unlimited power to the Pope amounts to idolatry . . . (and is) . . . incompatible with Christ's law which is the law of freedom." Subjection to ". . . arbitrary will . . . instead of common obedience to the natural law is . . . (only) slavery and captivity." Even as late as 1529, when the whole situation was much graver than it had been ten years before, he told Pope Clement VII to his face that the "pernicious errors" on this point (of papal absolutism) "explain such protests as Luther's *Babylonish Captivity of the Church*."

Going back to 1520, what the average German saw in the Miner's Son was only a learned, ascetic and devout monk, still dutifully wearing his monastic habit, who was being attacked for having denounced abuses and for calling upon people to have faith in Our Lord's redeeming work. No one could then imagine a divided Christendom.

The Excommunication left Luther free to recant within sixty days after its publication both in Rome and in three German dioceses. This Eck was commissioned to accomplish—an unwise appointment since he was a notorious personal opponent of the Miner's Son. Knowing this, the Bavarian professor tried and failed to escape the ungrateful duty. Mobs hooted him in various German cities. Even the German bishops made excuses for delay so that the sentence was published only late in September.

It remained to be seen what Frederick the Wise would do. Now that the agitation had gone so far, at least one other powerful German had already offered to protect Dr. Martin if the latter had had to flee from Electoral Saxony. Nevertheless the Elector's attitude was most important. Frederick was both prominent and devout. Moreover his heavy investment in indulgence-bearing relics might be expected to prejudice



him against religious innovations. Instead he continued to stand by the university which he had founded and its popular professor who was making such a noise in the world. To papal remonstrances he answered only that he was no theologian and that many learned men considered Luther's teaching eminently Christian. Still it was a serious matter to oppose the Pope. As time went on he was sufficiently concerned to ask Erasmus' advice.

The great humanist still saw matters in purely humanistic terms. In the early fall he had written that the "stupid monks will not rest until they have wholly overthrown the study of languages and good learning . . . would that Luther had taken my advice and refrained from . . . seditious acts!" That a man of his caliber should have so misjudged the first rumblings of the coming earthquake need astonish us no more than does the existence today of "democratic" or "parliamentary" Socialists sincerely attached to civil liberties under the illusion that—once the people of a Socialist state had become accustomed to government ownership of all capital—the all-powerful politicians would allow an effective opposition party to arise. Even after the Excommunication had been published, the cautious scholar would still do what he could for the condemned man.

Early in November, 1520, chance threw Frederick and Erasmus together. Charles V with the Rotterdamer in his train had come to Aix-la-Chapelle to be crowned in Charlemagne's octagonal, round-arched cathedral, and had then come to Cologne where the Elector on his way to the coronation had been detained by illness. Luther's sixty days of grace had only about a fortnight to run and probably he would refuse to recant. Indeed toward the end of his "Babylonish Captivity" he had threatened to refuse. The Saxon Prince, who must soon make up his own mind, sent his chaplain to ask Erasmus to come to his lodging.

There the two men talked before the fireplace. In appearance they must have made a striking contrast: The Elector not entirely unlike a wild boar, with his massive head slouched forward, his broad but not stupid face and his heavy-lidded eyes looking out over a curly, forked beard, and

the slender humanist with his tow hair, his thin, bony features and his demure, often satirical, smile. Erasmus preferred to talk Latin which the Elector understood but did not trust himself to speak as a more learned sovereign might have done. Frederick therefore addressed himself to the chaplain in the vernacular, and the chaplain interpreted. Was Luther in the wrong? Erasmus paused, smacked his lips and answered: "Luther has committed two sins; he has touched the Pope's tiara and the monks' bellies." The Elector laughed, well pleased; in cautious language he had been told not to hand over his now famous subject. The humanist shortly afterwards wrote to him: "The whole fight against Luther springs from tyrannical arrogance and hatred of the classics."

The Miner's Son, probably reassured as to his local sovereign's attitude, now determined on a dramatic gesture of defiance. He would publicly burn the Bull which excommunicated him. Just outside one of the gates of Wittenberg there was a place where the clothes of those who had died of the plague or of other contagious diseases were customarily burned. On December 10, 1520, he marched out, accompanied by a crowd of the university students, eager for new things like most students in all ages and enthusiastic followers of a dashing leader. There he lit a fire and threw into it not only a copy of the Bull but also a volume of the Canon Law, while his young supporters danced a sort of war dance or fandango round about.

The Pope and his officials now had only one move left. That was to appeal to Charles.

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It was by no means clear what the young Emperor and his advisers might attempt; still less what the German Princes might allow them to do. On the one hand Charles was both conscientious and devout. In his position, he would hardly join in the Miner's Son's attack upon the immemorial Church of the West which, in spite of its corruption and its fierce quarrels with the Empire in the past, was nevertheless the chief institution of all society and a necessary support of civil authority including his own. The Spanish clergy had for some time been almost an arm of the royal power in their

country. Any weakening of the universal Church might lead to God knew what anarchical attempts against the whole social order. Already at the urging of Leo X's Legate Aleandro or Aleander, a learned, zealous and wily Venetian, the Emperor had had Dr. Martin's books burned in the Netherlands which were his hereditary possessions.

On the other hand, Leo X had tried so hard to prevent his becoming Emperor. Some of the older men upon whom the young Hapsburg relied for advice were Humanists and had undoubtedly pointed out to him that any Pope in the latter's capacity as an Italian Prince might again become an opponent of his. Accordingly the papal power—as distinguished from the Church as a whole—might bear watching. Charles' ambassador at Rome had recently written: "Should the Emperor go to Germany he ought to show a little favor to a friar who is called Friar Martin and stays with the Duke of Saxony. The Pope is much afraid of him because he preaches and publishes great things against the papal power. He is said to be a great scholar who holds his own against the Pope very brilliantly . . . through him the Pope might be driven to make an alliance with your majesty."

Also no matter what Charles might wish to do, there remained the question of what he could do. In several of his vast but scattered hereditary possessions he was having trouble. In Spain where his Flemish advisers were disliked—even the rudimentary nationalisms of the time were rubbed the wrong way by an international governing power acting through foreigners—a number of districts were in open revolt. His kingdom of Naples was exposed to a possible Turkish attack by sea and troubled by intrigues of the French who threatened war. He could not even count unreservedly upon his Austrian territories, so great was the independence of each of their separate provinces.

In the Germanies, as we saw in Chapter VIII, nothing could be done, even in words, without the consent of the Diet. Moreover in practice each local lordship or free city was a law unto itself, whatever the Diet might say. Any strongly fortified town garrisoned by a stubborn city militia, which would usually outnumber the assailant's field army, was a tough nut to crack. Machiavelli had admiringly noted

that the German cities were accustomed always to keep a year's supply of provisions and firewood within their walls and that even the richest princes could seldom keep an army in the field for as long as that.

Charles' first Diet met him at Worms in January, 1521, and when Aleander and another Papal Legate arrived they found themselves in a hornets' nest of anti-papal feeling. Aleander wrote that he could hardly persuade anyone to rent him a lodging, and finally found himself shivering in an attic which had no stove, while nine-tenths of the Germans cried: "Long live Luther!" and the other tenth cried: "Death to the Pope!" Even strong papalists, like Duke George of Saxony the Elector Frederick's cousin, were angry at the existing moral and financial abuses. The German printing-presses were pouring out Lutheran books and pamphlets, while few printers would set refutations which, if printed at all, were promptly bought up and burned by a syndicate of Lutherans and Jews. Among the Humanists, to be Lutheran was a badge of learning, especially Greek learning. Those of the middle ranks among the clergy who were either civil or canon lawyers, also most of the monks, friars and lesser clergy except the parish priests, were for the religious innovators. The Legates were insulted in the streets. At least once Aleander was threatened with death, and when he complained to the Emperor's advisers they shrugged their shoulders.

Nevertheless the Legates persisted so strenuously that the question as to how Luther was to be tried was debated for some two months. According to them, since the Pope, the only competent judge in matters of faith, had condemned the insolent monk, the Emperor and the Diet could only execute the sentence. The Elector Frederick's Saxon lawyers made the point that Charles in his coronation oath had expressly promised to put no German under the ban of the Empire for heresy without a hearing at which the accused had been convicted by judges who were above suspicion—by which they seem to have meant German judges. Moreover even those members of the Diet who did not sympathize with the Miner's Son told Aleander and his companion that severity toward him might provoke rebellion.



Charles' decision was a compromise. The excommunicated heretic would not be allowed to discuss doctrine at Worms but he would not be brought secretly and kept isolated under guard. He must be allowed to come freely under safe conduct, and to stay at the local friary of his Order, the Augustinians, where he could consult with his friends. His hearing would merely determine whether he had written certain books which would be put before him and whether he would recant all or a part of their contents. Moreover Charles' summons and safe conduct addressed him courteously, almost deferentially, as "Honorable, pious and beloved."

On Brother Martin's side faint-hearted friends urged him not to go to Worms, on the ground that his safe conduct might be dishonored there as that of Huss had been at the Council of Constance a century before. He answered in the defiant rhetoric which had already made him famous: "I would go though there were as many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the roofs." No doubt he had been secretly promised the Elector's continued protection; but still matters might turn out badly. His journey to Worms was a triumphal progress. The municipality of Wittenberg provided him a three-horse wagon for his journey. He was cheered repeatedly in towns and villages. Three times he was asked to preach, excommunicated though he was—still another example of the difference between that day and ours. Crowds flocked to hear his sermons. At Erfurt where the university was strongly Humanist the enthusiasm was great.

In Worms itself his entry was cheered to the echo. Moreover the enthusiasm for him was by no means all popular froth. Besides Frederick of Saxony he now had another powerful Prince on his side—the Elector Palatine who dominated the Middle Rhine was said to "roar like ten bulls" in his favor. Also he had many well-wishers among the lesser gentry who counted because of their familiarity with arms. Long afterwards he used to boast that if he had liked he could have raised such a tumult that the Emperor himself would have reason to fear.

Nevertheless Luther's first appearance before the Diet disappointed his supporters. The Assembly met in the great hall of the Archbishop's palace which was destroyed some

two centuries later so that we cannot be certain of the stage setting of the famous scene. Charles presided with dignity, his pale, beardless face looking down calmly and seriously over the large assembly and his slight form clothed in Spanish fashion in black and gold. His bodyguard of Spanish noblemen surrounded him, and many of the Germans disliked their presence and their haughty bearing. Luther still wore his black Augustinian friar's robe. It was late in the afternoon when he was ushered in. He entered smiling, from impudence so some of his enemies thought, though probably from embarrassment. It was no small thing for a Miner's Son to confront the assembled German Princes and the Emperor himself.

An official had been designated to question him. He acknowledged having written the books which lay upon a table. The next question, however, took him aback, for he had expected to be allowed to defend his propositions. Instead he was simply asked whether he would now withdraw any or all of his published opinions. At this he became confused. He hesitated. Then, his great voice sinking to an almost inaudible whisper, he asked for a day's delay in which to consider. The son of such humble parents, now that he had suddenly been catapulted to a dangerous place among the great, might be pardoned an attack of stage fright. He was answered that although the summons to him had been plain enough, nevertheless the Emperor would be graciously pleased to give him the delay which he asked.

The second and decisive session was held next day, April 18. We of the Twentieth Century tend to see the matter as a contest between Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church as we know them both. Instead the Legates feared and many members of the Diet, perhaps Charles himself, hoped that Luther would advance some proposal for reforming the Church which would diminish but not abolish the power of the Pope, and could at the same time be squared with what was then traditional theology.

It was even later in the afternoon than on the day before, so that the great Hall had to be lit by torches. At first Luther must have pleased those who favored conservative reform, for he quoted the Canon Law—which he had so gayly burned in

the previous December!—to the effect that papal pronouncements should be rejected when contrary to the Gospel and the Fathers of the Church. Next, however, he cut loose from tradition altogether. His words have been variously reported. Apparently his climax was: “Unless I am convinced by Scripture or plain reason, for I trust neither in Popes nor in Councils, since they have often erred and contradicted themselves, . . . my conscience is captive to the word of God. I neither can nor will recant anything, since it is neither right nor safe to act against conscience, God help me. Amen.”

His answer was then discussed. The Secretary to the Archbishop of Treves who was acting as Secretary of the Diet said: “If . . . anyone who denies the definitions made by Councils or the Church must be refuted by Scripture, there would be nothing certain or settled throughout Christendom.” It was the point on which Bossuet in his *Variations of Protestantism* was to dwell more than a century later.

The Emperor now intervened with a single question: “Does Luther believe that General Councils of the Church can err?” This was both significant and diplomatic since it did not involve the papal power. Luther repeated once more his belief that Councils might be mistaken. “It is enough,” said the Emperor, “since he has denied Councils we wish to hear no more,” and adjourned the session. As the Wittenberg Doctor was being escorted from the room some of Charles’ Spaniards may have threatened him or, more probably, certain armed German nobles may have mistakenly thought that he had been arrested and was being taken to prison. At all events those Germans—who were of course far more numerous than the Spaniards—formed a defensive ring around him and escorted him to his lodging with soldierly gestures of triumph in which he joined.

As the members of the Diet dispersed in the darkness the Pope’s Legates were jubilant. Their enemy had put himself beyond the pale! Charles himself was of their mind; since Luther had set himself against all Christendom, he must now be outlawed as an obstinate heretic.

Next day the young Hapsburg tried to settle the matter. He met the Princes with a paper written in French in his own hand, and a German translation of it was read aloud to

them. "The Emperors, his predecessors," it said, "also the Archdukes of Austria and the Dukes of Burgundy had been the truest sons of the Catholic Church. A single monk, led astray by private judgment against the faith of all Christians for a thousand years and more, impudently concludes that all Christians up to now have erred. I therefore stake upon this cause all my dominions, my friends, my body and my blood, my life and soul." He repented his delay in taking action against Luther. He would not tear up the latter's safe conduct as the Emperor Sigismund and the Fathers of Constance had torn up that of Huss in order to burn him. The Miner's Son was to be escorted home but forbidden to preach or otherwise to seduce people with his false and evil teaching.

The Princes, however, held back. They could not agree with the new doctrines, not even Frederick was prepared to go so far, but their anti-papal feeling was supplemented by a lively fear that strong measures against Dr. Martin might provoke revolt. For thirty years there had been a series of local insurrections, and dissatisfaction was now stronger than ever. Former rebellions had used as their standard the curious device of raising a shoe which was called the "Bundschuh" on a pole. In the night placards had been tacked up on the doors of the Archbishop's palace and other public buildings on which were written the ominous words "Bundschuh, Bundschuh, Bundschuh." After all, the Miner's Son had offered to submit either to reason or to Scripture, and it was still a permitted opinion in the Western Church that Scripture contained all things necessary for salvation. The Princes therefore urged that he be not condemned but persuaded. Let learned men show him his errors. Could he be induced to stop stirring up the people, many evils would be avoided.

Charles had no choice but to consent to further discussion. The Legates were gloomy, since an Orthodox position which would open the door to attacks upon papal power and finance might, if adopted by Luther, be ratified by the Diet. On April 24, a full week after the first hearing, a committee of eight representing all three chambers of the assembly conferred with him. Even when he would admit no final authority except Scripture as interpreted by what he con-



sidered right reason, the Archbishop of Treves kept on trying to find some basis of agreement. Would Luther submit to the joint judgment of the Pope and Emperor, or of the Emperor alone, or of the Emperor and the Diet, or of a future Council? Only when the Wittenberger had delighted the Legates by refusing all these alternatives was he ordered to leave Worms the next day, April 26. Even then the decree putting him under the ban of the Empire was not signed by Charles until May 25, after the Diet had adjourned and after most of its members including the Saxon and Palatine Electors had left Worms.

In the theatre a brilliantly lighted scene is sometimes followed by one so darkened that the audience cannot see clearly the dim figures on the stage. So it was with the last moves at Worms after Luther's departure. One asks in vain: Why was the ban so long postponed? D. B. Wyndham Lewis thinks that the Emperor and his advisers deliberately delayed in order to give the "little monk" time to get away. Nothing seems to have been said by the Emperor about papal powers in general, still less about papal money-raising which had fired the powder train. The Diet adjourned after registering no less than a hundred German complaints against the papacy, most of them concerned with money.

Meanwhile an extraordinary farce had been played. Luther, with his safe conduct which still had twenty days to run, had started back toward Wittenberg. In that time so different from our own he several times preached by invitation and at least once was entertained in a Benedictine monastery—excommunicated and about to be outlawed though he was. Then on May 4 he was apparently kidnapped by armed horsemen and carried away to a supposedly unknown destination. There were various rumors, for instance that his body had been found thrust through with a dagger. For the moment many of his sympathizers were in despair. One of the Legates suspected the Elector Frederick, who professed astonishment and said that he was willing to swear that he knew nothing about the matter.

In fact this denial, although perhaps verbally true, was in substance wholly false. Although at one stage of the proceedings the Saxon Prince had angrily said: "The rascally monk

has spoiled everything with his fantastic opinions," nevertheless the final scene had been prearranged between Dr. Martin and his devout sovereign. The supposed kidnappers, acting under orders from the Elector, had taken the Miner's Son to Frederick's castle of the Wartburg where he remained until the following spring under an increasingly transparent incognito. He dressed as a knight, let his hair and beard grow, wore a sword and was addressed as Younker or Junker George, but from time to time he corresponded freely with friends outside. He even wrote a violent letter of rebuke to Albrecht of Mayence who had begun selling Indulgences again, whereat the Hohenzollern sent back a meek reply, apparently in the hope that if a separate German Church was formed he himself might head it. For the most part, however, Luther while at the Wartburg spent his time in translating the Bible into German.

Without questioning Charles' sincerity, one wonders whether he was really deceived. One thing at least was now certain, if indeed anyone had ever doubted it: in the Germanies practically all real power was in the hands of the local governments.

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Thus the movement which was to become Protestantism was launched, and at the same time the other distracting experiences of the time were intensified. Magellan was killed on the day after Luther left Worms—when in the following year his flagship the *Victoria* returned, his achievement must have seemed greater than the safe return of a rocket-ship from the moon would seem tomorrow. On the day after Magellan's death Cortes launched a squadron of small fighting ships which would presently get control of the lake in which the Aztec island-capital stood. The mind of Europe was being whirled around like a boat shooting rapids.

In the same year, 1521, two other notable events took place. One of these sent a chill through every Court in Christendom. In August, shortly after the last Aztec Head-Chief had surrendered to Cortes, Suleiman or Solyman, the greatest of the Turkish Sultans, took the fortress of Belgrade which had guarded the southern frontier of Hungary. Thereafter for

more than a generation the sound of the advancing Turkish drums throbbed horribly in Western ears.

Meanwhile, unnoticed by the world, in what was then the Pyrenean kingdom of Navarre a young Basque officer had his leg broken by a cannon-ball while defending Pamplona or Pampeluna from a pro-French force. He was Inigo de Loyola—he later changed his baptismal name to Ignatius after the great Saint of Antioch. His leg was badly set so that he was permanently barred from active service, and during a long convalescence his thoughts began to turn from military glory to God.

## *VIII. Charles, Luther and Erasmus*

FOR nine years after the Diet of Worms the Emperor found himself too busy to revisit the Germanies. His deputy there was his younger brother Ferdinand to whom he had made over the Austrian Archduchies.

Although during those years Luther's religious revolt did not sweep all the German States as the Papal Legates at Worms had feared, nevertheless that revolt took firm root. The Miner's Son, mingling outward moderation with radical religious steps, maintained his theological leadership of the movement in spite of the heavy blow which—at long last—Erasmus struck for tradition. The Rotterdamer at least divided the Humanists, and at the same time those scholars who remained religious rebels began to take second place behind the Lutheran Princes who took over the command of affairs.

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Although Charles was not one of the handful of great men who have molded events for generations to come, and although he had inherited madness from his mother and extreme eccentricity from his father's father, he was sane, conscientious, cautious but brave and persevering. Whereas Francis I, except for his gallantry in battle, was a lazy, light-minded fellow, and Henry VIII was too often a monster in human form, the Emperor was a conscientious man worthy of respect and sympathy. In all his portraits his eyes are alert and his dress sober, and in the later ones his bearing is that of a great but modest gentleman who has schooled himself to courtesy and moderation. In his native Netherlands on the whole he was popular, and in Spain where he spent most of his time he ended by making himself beloved.

His chief advisers were either Erasmian or personally lukewarm in religion, perhaps even indifferent as he himself was



not. After his death several of them were condemned by the Inquisition. The Franciscan Glapion, one of his favorite confessors, was suspect at Rome because he wished to confer with Luther and the Elector of Saxony. Charles' most important lay-counsellor was Granvelle, a lawyer from the Franche Comté the so-called "Free" County of Burgundy, a district in the Jura country now part of eastern France near the Swiss border but then within the Empire.

No advice, however, could alter the disagreeable fact that his government—like most governments in times of rising prices—was always short of money in spite of the stream of bullion which would soon begin to flow into Spain from the Americas.

Moreover his conduct was soon to show that he and his counsellors overestimated his power in the Germanies or had not correctly judged the temper of the Lutheran Princes.

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The Miner's Son's sharp opposition to the official Church was putting Erasmus in a more and more uncomfortable position. Not for nothing did the defenders of tradition say that he had "laid the egg which the Wittenberger had hatched." The first of the latter's famous *Theses* had led off with the Dutch Scholar's point about "poenitentiam agité." Also Erasmus had led the way in trusting his individual judgment as to other familiar texts. When his edition of the New Testament had been attacked on the ground that he had tried to correct the Gospel and even the Lord's Prayer, he had scornfully answered: "As if I cavilled at Matthew and Luke instead of at those who out of ignorance and carelessness have corrupted them! Do people wish that the Church should possess Holy Scripture as correct as possible or not?" Such hard words as might have been necessary would have been exchanged only among scholars, accompanied by nothing more bitter than malicious little smiles.

On the other hand, Luther would have welcomed Lenin's saying that revolutions cannot be made with rose-water. Already in 1520 he had written: "If we punish thieves with the gallows, robbers with the sword, and heretics with fire, why should we not rather attack with all arms these masters

of perdition, these cardinals, these popes and all the off-scourings of the Roman Sodom who eternally corrupt the Church of God, and why should we not wash our hands in their blood?" Indeed this passage is pale compared to many others which the reader may well be spared. When he really lets himself go, the Reformer's torrent of foul epithets, his delight in mingling theological controversy with references to excretion, sometimes seems almost insane.

In his ten months' seclusion at the Wartburg, working on his German translation of the New Testament, he seems not to have used any of the fourteen or more previous German versions. In general his text follows that of Erasmus. In his emphasis upon St. Paul's words about salvation by faith, he had proclaimed his individual interpretation of Scripture as the only rule of Christian belief. Consequently he found himself in difficulties over the identification of religion with good works in St. James' Epistle. He could not see that St. James and St. Paul supplement instead of contradicting each other. In his contempt for St. James' "Epistle of Straw," as he called it, he maintained that it was of less value than the other canonical books. Also he revived the opinion of certain ancient writers who had held that the Book of Revelation, the Epistle of St. Jude and the Epistle to the Hebrews were inferior and should therefore be lumped with St. James' Epistle in a sort of appendix to the New Testament. Worse still, he actually forged his key text from St. Paul who in the First Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans had written: "The just shall live by faith." Luther made it read "by faith alone," which is not what St. Paul says. Undoubtedly he had convinced himself that that was what the Apostle meant. When about to leave the Wartburg he actually wrote to the Elector Frederick: "Your Grace knows, or, if you do not, I now inform you . . . that I have received my gospel from Heaven only, by Our Lord Jesus Christ." It was a fearful responsibility.

One of Charles V's confessors, the Franciscan Friar Jean Glapion—repeating Erasmus' joke against the scholastics—dryly wrote to the Elector Frederick: "In Luther's hands the Bible becomes like a book of soft wax, to be squeezed and stretched to suit each individual. If it were well to propagate

heresy and error, I myself could prove still more startling things from the Bible than Luther has asserted."

To the Miner's Son's ethics we shall return in connection with his later life. Suffice it for the moment that in general he vigorously preached good morals—his worst enemies will hardly deny that a genuine zeal for righteousness inspired his protest against the Indulgence-sellers. Nevertheless some of his sayings about morals are as odd as his condescension to the writings of Apostles. In an exaggerated reaction against over-scrupulousness he wrote in a famous letter: "Sometimes we must even commit a sin through hatred and scorn for the devil so as not to give him the chance of creating trivial scruples in our minds." In another often-quoted letter, written from the Wartburg to a learned friend, we find him saying: "Sin cannot detach us from the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, even if we should commit fornication or murder a thousand times, yes a thousand times in a day." Although this is far enough from reality to make the whole passage only a violent figure of speech, still it is a queer consequence of believing in salvation by faith without the slightest moral effort.

The hardest charge against him for Lutherans to refute is that he seized on certain necessary truths so vehemently as to exclude others which are equally necessary truths. Maritain notes that his favorite themes—confidence in Our Lord and contempt for oneself, the importance of conscience as a guide to action, and the inability of fallen man to reconcile himself to God without Divine Grace—had indeed been insufficiently remembered throughout the society in which he lived, and holds that it was only because he held those great and ancient truths too narrowly, and connected them in his own mind with his intense desire to be rid of priesthood, that he found himself forced by the logic of his position into strange contradictions.

While the Miner's Son was meditating under the Romanesque arcades of the Wartburg or turning Erasmus' text of the New Testament into German in a room still preserved there with Gothic tracery in its graceful bay window and little round panes of glass, religious revolution was going forward in Wittenberg.

The strength of the movement was the desire for personal religion. Those who preached new things tirelessly insisted that all the set forms of worship which had been intended to encourage devotion had become barriers to real prayer. They repeated over and over again: Let there be no mediator between God and man.

The rising tide of what was to become Protestantism was about to be swelled by the appearance of comparatively cheap printed Bibles. Medieval men of course knew the Bible stories from the endless representations of them in the stained glass and sculpture in cathedrals and churches, but the stories had to be explained to them by priests. Few among the laity could either read or formerly afford to own a Bible, for a manuscript copy of it cost more than most men could earn in a year. Printing had now cut that cost by something like ninety-five per cent, while at the same time an increasing number of the enriched merchant class had learned to read. Consequently books and pamphlets could be used as a new means of propaganda, and we know today that revolutionaries are quicker than their conservative opponents to use propaganda effectively. The number of books and pamphlets of all sorts in German was shooting up. In 1520 there had been less than six hundred, a few years later nearly a thousand.

The effect of the appearance of printed Bibles was startling. No matter how firmly one believes—with the great majority of Christians in all ages—that the Scriptures, when fairly interpreted, support the sacramental teaching traditional in both Eastern and Western Christendom, still they do not support that teaching as explicitly as medieval Christians had believed. Plenty of passages can be interpreted, whether rightly or wrongly, as opposing this or that traditional belief or practice. For instance St. Paul's strenuous refusal to allow the Jewish law to be imposed upon the Christians of his day could be used to support attacks against any detailed code of outward behavior including the Catholic. For centuries the Mass had been considered as a sacrifice for the living and the dead, but the Tenth Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews insists that "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Our Lord's words in the Seventh Chapter of St. Mark's Gospel when he said to the



Pharisees: You are "making the Word of God of no effect because of your tradition," could be taken as an attack upon Christian tradition itself. Now that the people could read His recorded sayings for themselves, their new teachers asked why should they go on worshipping Him in wafers over which a priest had mumbled a set form of words?

Under the influence of fanatical preachers, at Wittenberg in the autumn of 1521 there was a demonstration against the Elector Frederick's cherished relics. Next some students rioted against the Mass, threw stones and denounced clerical celibacy. Some of the statues in the Wittenberg churches were smashed. In the German-speaking towns the church buildings were owned by the municipalities which also paid the priests' salaries out of the taxes, and this was true at Wittenberg except for the Castle church which was the Elector's private property. Early in 1522 a municipal ordinance directed all pictures and statues in the city churches and all altars except the high altars to be torn down.

We may be tempted to think of image-smashing as diabolical, and indeed it is hard to pardon the deliberate destruction of beauty, but probably the all-too-human pleasure in breaking things is motive enough.

In Wittenberg, Mass was now said in German. Communion was given in both kinds—the denial of the cup to the laity being considered a significant badge of an undue distinction between them and the clergy. The municipal brothel was closed, begging was forbidden, severe punishments for adultery were enacted. It was even proposed to close certain taverns in which heavy drinking went on—and this in what was called the most drunken town in the most drunken district of heavy-drinking Germany! The income from the properties of the twenty-one monasteries and nunneries in the city, and from perpetually endowed Masses for the repose of rich people's souls, was transferred into a common fund for various public purposes, including the support of orphans, schools and the university, dowries for poor girls and loans to workmen at four per cent. The perpetually endowed Masses, in England called chantries, which were considered particularly scandalous because the priests who were paid to say or sing them did no other spiritual work, were abolished. The

younger chantry priests were ordered to learn a trade, the older ones pensioned off. Fasting and confessions were done away with. Priests and monks in considerable numbers began to take wives. One enthusiastic innovator taught that receiving only the Host in Communion without also drinking from the Chalice was a positive sin. Ordinary, easygoing people must have felt that the world was being turned upside down.

The Elector Frederick did what he could, ordering that Mass should again be said in Latin, and that there should be no lay communion in both kinds, but the agitation continued. Who could tell how far these local innovations might go? He sent to Luther in the Wartburg for advice, and was frightened when the latter answered that he would return to Wittenberg at once. Hollow though Charles V's power was in the Germanies, still it was a serious matter openly to befriend an outlaw whom anyone could lawfully kill like a wild beast. Frederick may have wondered whether he had been wise in protecting his popular university professor.

In writing to the embarrassed Elector the Miner's Son took a high tone, as if he himself were protecting his sovereign and not the other way about. Full of courage and practical wisdom, he shaved his ten-months' beard, and had the priestly tonsure recut on the crown of his head. Taking off his knight's clothes, he again put on his black Augustinian friar's robe. Thus reassuring conservative opinion by appearing as an orthodox monk, he returned to Wittenberg and preached a series of vigorous sermons against mob violence. He arranged to have Mass again said in Latin, for the most part in the old words and with the old ceremonial such as the elevation of the Host and Chalice after the words of consecration. As far as the laity could see, only compulsory confession and fasting were still forbidden, also private Masses except in the Castle church, over which the municipality had no power. Communion in both kinds was retained except on Easter Day when the large number of communicants made it inconvenient.

Dr. Martin has been charged with deceit, because he omitted in the "Canon" of the Latin Mass—i.e. the central part of the service leading up to and including the Communion—those prayers which emphasize that the Mass is a

sacrifice. Since for him the Mass is not a sacrifice but a promise of grace, he retained only its scriptural parts, the Lord's Prayer and Our Lord's "Words of Institution" reciting what He did at the Last Supper, and also the triple invocation of Him as the Lamb of God. As to his omissions he said: "The priests"—by which he meant those who were now acting as Ministers in his counter-church—"know why it is their duty to suppress the Canon, and it is not necessary to discuss that matter with the laity." Thus he indirectly tells us that the laity had been so ill-instructed that they would not notice the difference!

In general, during the life of the Elector Frederick who was by no means wholly in sympathy with religious changes, Luther insisted on the desirability of not going too far. "The Gospel," he said, "will make a way for itself without the use of force"—a principle which he did not always follow later when he had local sovereigns who were on his side.

Besides townsmen like the Wittenbergers, Lutheran propaganda and the more or less related agitations that went with it were appealing to two different sorts of men, the Princes and the peasants. The Princes were beginning to see a chance of seizing Church property for themselves. One of the preachers who had been stirring up Wittenberg tauntingly wrote in a pamphlet: "Through the German nobles you, Luther, were allowed to appear . . . at Worms. Fine visions they had of the . . . abbeys and cloisters which your preaching would cast at their feet! If you had wavered at Worms you would have been stabbed by the nobles. . . . It's obvious to everyone." On the other hand, the hot religious discussions, especially the setting up of "the Gospel" against the official Church, were stirring up the peasants who were pinched between rising prices and the exactions of their landlords, many of whom were churchmen. For the moment the potential rebels thought of the Miner's Son as a friend, while the Princes saw in him a defender of their position because of his moderation in Wittenberg.



Early in 1522 the young Emperor was able to obtain a Pope after his own heart. Francis I was about to declare war

on him and Leo X had ordered a solemn thanksgiving to celebrate the coming strife between Christians but after doing so the Pope had died. Thanks chiefly to Leo's cousin Cardinal Giulio de Medici, then friendly, Charles was able to arrange that Leo's successor was a Dutch Cardinal who had been his own tutor. The new Pope took the title of Adrian or Hadrian VI. He was in Spain when elected and his Christian name was Adrian. He was a conscientious, austere man detested by the pleasure-loving Romans, and was determined upon moral reform, especially reform of the Papal Court which—in the words of the *Catholic Encyclopedia*—"thrived on corruption."

Unhappily every undertaking of his short pontificate was in a worldly sense a failure. The Roman officials obstinately defended the abuses which made them rich. When the Turks attacked Rhodes, the great fortress and naval base of the Knights of St. John, Adrian could not persuade the Venetians to send help, so that the place finally fell after a gallant defense.

Charles and Ferdinand were involved in another failure of Adrian's. With the latter as Pope, the war against France merely dragging on and the Spanish revolt against Charles put down, the Emperor thought it possible to get Luther's sentence enforced in the Germanies. To that end he summoned a Diet, over which Ferdinand was to preside, to meet at Nuremberg. Adrian sent a Nuncio who carried out his orders to admit the abuses of papal finance and to promise reform of these and other corruptions. The Princes, however, would do nothing. Even the Pope's admission that Luther had at first done well and his assurance that a Council would be held in some German city did not move them. Led by the Elector Frederick's representative they insisted that to banish the man who had tranquilized Wittenberg would result in further disorders. In the fall of 1523 Adrian died, with a group of Cardinals hideously crowding his deathbed to demand where he had hidden the treasure which they mistakenly believed that he had gathered. They took his simple life for miserliness! The Romans even applauded a joker who hung a wreath on the door of the Pope's physician with the motto: "To the deliverer of his country."



Shortly after Adrian's death Leo X's cousin Cardinal Giulio Medici was elected Pope and took the title of Clement VII. He had proved himself a good administrator but he was timid and irresolute, and as a Medici he was fairly certain to allow merely Florentine and family interests to affect his actions as Pope. Worse still, although in the words of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* his parents may have been betrothed they "had not been properly married." As a bastard he could not have held any clerical office except by dispensation from Leo.

Within a few months of Clement's election the young Emperor was already urging him to call a Council. Although nothing was to come of this for more than twenty years, one of Charles' secret letters to the new Pope made the prophetic suggestion that the little Tyrolese city of Trent might be a suitable meeting place.

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Still another of Adrian's failures had been his inability to persuade Erasmus, whom he had known well, to write against Luther. An English Bishop who was an old acquaintance of the Rotterdamer also failed, as did Duke George of Saxony, the Elector Frederick's cousin who had presided over the Leipzig debate. Oddly enough, it was the taunts of a friend of Luther, a man as foul-mouthed as the Miner's Son himself, which at last stung the humanist into replying.

Like Charles V's question at Worms, Erasmus' attack was skilfully directed. It would not do to complain of Dr. Martin for making individual interpretations of Scripture, or for deprecating ceremonies, since the Rotterdamer had done these things himself. He must select a subject upon which he had always disagreed with Luther.

Erasmus chose Free Will, better defined as Free Choice. As we have seen, Luther—confusing our involuntary impulses with the consent of the Will to sinful acts—had come to believe concupiscence invincible and therefore that man cannot cooperate with God in working out his own salvation. The Grace of God must do it all. The Wittenberger was by no means an absolute determinist in the Calvinist or in the present-day pseudo-scientific sense; he admitted that man by

himself can achieve a certain civic virtue. Only with regard to eternal salvation did he insist that our power of choice was like an unresisting animal which is ridden and guided either by God or the Devil. That however was enough to separate him from the historic Church which, while insisting on the necessity for Divine Grace, had also insisted that man's Will can at least cooperate with Grace. Here was Erasmus' opportunity.

On this point the Dutch Scholar's record was clear. Long ago in 1517 in his "Paraphrase" of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans he had insisted that, even though we may be sure that the fate of the soul depends almost wholly on Divine Grace, at the same time man must have at least a very slight power either to reject or to cooperate with God. Otherwise we are not moral beings. If we are mere automata whose every act is determined beforehand, then we might as well follow all our sinful inclinations: ". . . for whether we torment ourselves or indulge our Will, yet what God has once decreed for us will happen."

At least as early as February, 1524, he was working at a short book, hardly more than a pamphlet, which he called *A Discussion on Free Choice*. Undoubtedly he had been grieved to find Luther's fame eclipsing his own. Only the year before he had written to Pope Adrian: "I who was formerly described in a myriad of letters as 'the thrice greatest hero,' 'the king of letters,' 'the star of Germany,' 'the sun of learning,' 'the mainstay of literature,' 'the champion of a more genuine theology,' am now passed over in silence or depicted in very different colors." Undoubtedly he was made increasingly uncomfortable by the constant attacks upon him by both parties. Nevertheless he was now expressing a real conviction.

He began with preliminary definitions: free choice is "that quality of the human will by which a man is able to apply himself to those things which lead to eternal salvation or to turn away from them." Next he called the roll of the Fathers, the great teachers of the Early Church: Origen, Tertullian, St. Basil, St. Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. John Damascene, St. Hilary of Poitiers, St. Ambrose of Milan, St.

Jerome and St. Augustine of Hippo. Since Luther especially relied upon his own interpretation of St. Augustine in order to justify his theory of predestination to good or evil, Erasmus took special pains to challenge that interpretation. Next he passed in review the great medieval philosophers, dwelling especially upon St. Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus and Durandus—it was indeed new for him to quote the Scholastics with approval! He rounded out his list of authorities by citing the Popes, the Councils of the Church and the theological faculties of every university in Europe.

At this point he met head-on Luther's claim to rely upon the plain sense of Holy Scripture. The inspired Word of God should indeed weigh more than all human opinions, but the difficulty is to decide what the Scriptures mean, and good and learned men have strenuously and endlessly debated this from the earliest times. Whatever men read in the Bible they distort into a statement of their own opinions, just as lovers incessantly imagine that they see the object of their love wherever they turn. In the beginning the Church was certainly inspired by the Holy Ghost, and although there are those who now say that she has for many centuries lost the apostolic spirit, nevertheless it is at least more probable that the successors of the Apostles have that spirit than those who cannot claim such succession. If no one's interpretation is inspired, then the whole matter is uncertain, and the same would be true if everyone were inspired, since individuals do not agree.

The fact is, Erasmus insists, that even if the Church has no authority, still many scriptural texts expressly state the freedom of the Will to choose either good or evil. The few texts which seem to deny our freedom are at least easier to explain away than those which assert it. "I follow the opinion of those who attribute something to free choice but very much more to grace."

Finally, the Christian God is a God of love, while Luther's God who predestines men to damnation is a God of hate.

An endearing aspect of Erasmus' *Discussion* is its moderation and modesty. Unlike nearly all the controversial writings of his day, there is nothing abusive in it. He himself too

hopefully said: "I treat the matter with such moderation that . . . even Luther will not be angry." Moreover he fully understood that he was reaching out to the extreme limit of the ideas which the human mind can grasp; ". . . we can speak of God only with inadequate words. . . . Many problems should be postponed not to the Ecumenical Council but to the time when . . . we shall see God face to face. . . . There are in sacred literature certain sanctuaries into which God has not willed that we should penetrate further."

Toward the end there is a charming personal touch: "I do not play the part of a judge . . . but of one who would thresh out the matter thoroughly. . . . Old as I am, it will not shame or grieve me to learn from a young man"—he was fifty-seven and Luther was forty—"provided he teaches me what is more satisfactory to my judgment and does it with the gentleness of the Gospel."

The gentleness of the Gospel was not always in Luther's line. After the failure of his first efforts to persuade the great humanist to come out openly on his side he had taken a mixed attitude toward the latter. In the previous year he had written: "I see how far the man is from the knowledge of Christian things," and again, "He has done what he was called to do; he has introduced the study of the tongues and has called us from those other Godless studies. Perhaps, like Moses he will die in the land of Moab, for to come to the promised land of better pursuits is not his lot." But when he began to hear rumors that Erasmus was writing against him, he tried to head him off in a curious letter, writing in part, "I do not hold it against you that you keep aloof from me, the better to safeguard your interests with my enemies the Papists. . . . For I saw that the Lord had not yet bestowed on you the fortitude or even the discernment to join freely and confidently with me in attacking these monsters; nor am I the sort of man to exact from you that which is beyond your strength and capacity. Nay, I have tolerated and honored your weakness and the extent of God's gifts which you possess. For surely . . . it was a magnificent and remarkable gift of God to you for which we should be grateful, that learning reigns and flourishes, so that we now have a pure text of the sacred Scriptures . . . it is a much more serious matter to be



gored by Erasmus than to be set upon by all the Papists at once. I myself never desired that you should enter into my camp"—what a lie! He continues: "I beg of you that if you cannot offer any assistance you will remain a spectator of my tragedy, and particularly that you will publish no works against me as I will publish none against you."

Erasmus answered mildly, even demurely: "I do not admit that you love evangelical sincerity more than I," at the same time taking care to tell his correspondent nothing about his own labors of the last few months: "So far I have written nothing against you . . . although by writing I could have won great applause from Princes." Since his reply is dated May 8, 1524, and since we know from another letter of his that he had been writing at his *Discussion on Free Choice* at least as early as February, his evasion comes close to falsehood.

In September the little book was at last published. It was praised or blamed according to the party spirit of readers and critics, much as books are today for being either for or against Marxian Socialism and Communism. Charles V, whose born subject Erasmus as a Netherlander was, wrote that the latter had opposed Luther more effectively than Popes, Kings and universities. Since the Emperor had for some time paid a pension to the learned writer who had nevertheless refused all invitations to live at Court, it must have pleased both parties to feel that the Rotterdamer had at least made a literary return on the money advanced.

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For more than a year the Miner's Son made no reply. At the moment even his boiling energies were fully occupied. He was finding his private life increasingly difficult. Also he was finally substituting German for Latin in the Wittenberg church services—the Elector Frederick was now a sick man and near his end. Worst of all the peasants' revolt, after smouldering so long, had at last blazed up.

This revolt put Luther—in his turn—in a difficult position. In the past he had often preached against the oppression endured by those now in rebellion. Consequently the peasants thought of him as a sympathizer, perhaps as a leader. They

appealed to "the Gospel"—his favorite phrase!—to justify their program.

Specifically, they demanded the abolition of a long list of concrete grievances. Most of these fall under two heads, for in the Germanies the unhappy cultivators of the soil were being whipsawed between the old, customary feudal law and the new influence of the rediscovered Roman Law, both of which cut harshly into their daily lives. The old Roman refusal to recognize any right or privilege not confirmed by a written contract was being used by the landlords to "enclose" common lands. In other words, these landlords were beginning to use for their own exclusive profit lands in which both the lord of the manor and the villagers who had been serfs and were now almost peasant proprietors had had an immemorial, customary right to pasture a certain number of cattle, sheep or hogs. Incidentally the same process was going on in England under Henry VIII.

At the same time that the German peasants were clamoring to have the Roman Law superseded by old German Law, they were also complaining bitterly of many features of the latter. The old customary obligation of heriot, that is the duty of a son of a tenant to contribute something to the lord either in money or in kind on succeeding to his father's holding, also the duty to come and work for certain days in the year on the lord's private or domain lands, had seemed natural enough when all life was local and when each lord of a manor had been almost a little king in his own village. With the development of commerce, rising prices and a money economy, these things were now vehemently resented. Conservatively enough, the unhappy peasants did not ask to be wholly free from forced labor but only that the amount of it should be lessened. They also cited as hardships that they were not allowed to hunt, fish and cut wood, but whether these were old or new grievances is not clear. The only planks in their platform which directly touched religion or the Church were that they wished to elect their own parish priest and have the parish tithes shared between the clergy and the poor.

On the other hand, as is inevitable in popular rebellions, when the peasants took up arms they were joined by a certain

number of criminals and half-crazy hot-heads—the “lunatic fringe of reform” in Theodore Roosevelt’s famous phrase. The rebel bands roamed about over the central and southern German states, ill-organized and with no general strategic plan, but formidable through their numbers.

At first the German nobles were paralyzed with fright. “We are all lost Princes,” one of them wrote. Presently, however, they plucked up courage and began raising troops. Probably the rebels were making themselves unpopular even among members of their own class, for irregular forces must live on the country and are therefore soon reduced toward the level of mere bandits.

Up to April, 1525, Luther ineffectively rebuked both sides but as the rebels became more and more violent and destructive he went over to the nobles. His vehement exhortations to the latter have scandalized many of his later admirers. A single quotation may suffice. Remembering his profession as a man of God, he begins: “My good Lords, succor the poor, pity their misery.” But promptly his tone changes to: “. . . punish, stab, strike! Let who can strangle the wolves and rascally blackguards! . . . not only Princes and Magistrates should make an end to them; every honest man has the right to be judge and executioner of such scoundrels, and to kill them as one would kill a mad dog.” Not all the German landlords and Princes were as ferocious as this preacher of the Gospel. Some, especially among the bishops and abbots, made substantial concessions to the rebels. But most of them followed the Reformer’s advice and suppressed the insurrection with great slaughter. Among those who did so was John, the brother of the Elector Frederick and a convinced religious innovator who succeeded Frederick when the latter died in May, 1525.

Erasmus who was living in Bâle, near which some fighting against the peasants took place, wrote: “We can almost hear the sound of the artillery.”

Returning to Luther, in June he married an escaped nun. Opinions on this step will differ according to what one thinks men and women should do when they have bound themselves by vows and then come to find that they no longer believe in the principle on which the vow had been taken.

Renan, the Nineteenth Century French priest who lost his faith and then did his best to destroy that of others, when asked why he remained chaste is said to have replied: "A chicken will go on scratching after its head has been chopped off." Since the Miner's Son claimed to have received his version of the Gospel "from heaven only, by Our Lord Jesus Christ," as we saw earlier in this chapter, he was bolder.

At least five years before and probably earlier he had persuaded himself that "concupiscence is invincible," probably thinking chiefly of the broader sense of the word, as meaning any desire for some lesser good which may distract us from our chief good which is God Himself. The fact that his many enemies never charged him with yielding to sexual desire before his marriage argues that no evidence whatsoever existed against him. When at the Wartburg he had first heard that the Wittenberger monks were beginning to take wives he had written: "I do not like that tumultuous exodus from the cloister," but the context shows that he would merely have preferred a more orderly repudiation of freely taken vows. Already he had come to believe in marriage for all, including nuns who were now being "liberated" by parties of religious innovators—a crime for which the legal punishment had been death.

The subsequent rush for marriage by former celibates in those German districts where vows were no longer enforced by the civil law shows how lightly these solemn pledges must originally have been taken by many. Today both monasticism and the celibacy of Roman Catholic priests of the Latin rite continue to exist in spite of their non-enforcement by governments—secular priests of the Eastern rites both in and out of communion with the Papacy are of course married in conformity with the immemorial custom of Christendom east of the Adriatic.

For some time Luther himself had not been in a hurry to set an example by marrying, but presently he found himself distressed by that familiar difficulty of the Twentieth Century world, the servant problem. Whether after rising to prominence in his Order he had had his personal wants attended to by some junior monk, lay-brother or novice we do not



know. At all events while living in the world he had developed into the familiar type of preoccupied or unduly occupied man who seems unable to look out for himself. He later said, according to his *Table Talk*, that for a year before his marriage his bed had not been made, so that the blankets and straw mattress had become so foul that he could not sleep except when overcome by fatigue. At that time there were no clubs in the modern sense, and few except passing travellers found the existing inns and taverns tolerable. At the age of forty, therefore, the Miner's Son began to look about for a wife.

Among the "liberated" nuns was a certain Catherine von Bora, now twenty-six years old. Her mother had died when she was five, and when she was nine her father, who was a noble but very poor, had remarried and sent her to a nunnery which, unlike many convents, would consent to receive gentlewomen who could pay nothing. At sixteen she had taken nuns' vows—apparently with no vocation whatsoever. Her family had merely wanted to be rid of her while seeing that she did not starve. She herself had known only convent life. How much the Miner's Son's writings had influenced her and her sisters "in religion" we do not know, and he seems not to have had a hand in the "liberation" of herself and eleven others. He also seems not to have been immediately attracted to her, for in the first year of her new life there had been some question of her marriage to two other men—in those days the life of a single woman without a legal protector was difficult. He and she were married some nine months after Erasmus' *Discussion* had been published, and according to the bridegroom it was she who persuaded him to answer the Rotterdamer.

Meanwhile the Wittenberg Doctor had taken another radical step which, although apparently less noticed at the time than his marriage, was even more far-reaching as to Church order. He "ordained" a deacon. Now from the time that the infant Church had first come out into the full light of history it had been an essential part of her teaching that only a bishop in succession from the Apostles could consecrate other bishops or ordain priests and deacons. Luther could

have maintained the tradition, for the Bishop of Samland in East Prussia had come over to him. Full of self-confidence, however, he, although a simple priest and not a bishop, deliberately broke the Apostolic Succession.

His reply to Erasmus he called *De Servo Arbitrio*, which may be translated "On the Bondage of the Will," was finished only toward the end of the year. It was full of abuse as was now his habit. It dwells on such Biblical texts as support or seem to support its thesis, and repeats the familiar argument that because God knows the future he necessarily determines that future as far as human salvation or damnation are concerned. That the human mind cannot conceive of anything happening except in time, whereas the mind of God is outside time, the author seems not to have considered, also the possibility that God may have limited His own omnipotence in order to make us to some extent free and therefore moral beings. Moreover the Reformer took for granted that most of mankind would be damned. "This is the acme of faith," he wrote, "to believe that God who saves so few and condemns so many is merciful; that he is just who has made us necessarily doomed to damnation, so that . . . he seems to delight in the tortures of the wretched, and to be more deserving of hatred than of love. If by any effort of reason I could conceive how God, who shows so much anger and iniquity, could be merciful and just, there would be no need of faith."

Indeed the Miner's Son had always despised reason which he was fond of calling the Devil's whore. According to one of his many strange turns of speech, it should be banished to the foulest place in the house, the latrines. Not he but Calvin was to rationalize fully the doctrine of inexorable doom.

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From his own point of view the Wittenberg Doctor indeed had reason to curse, for with time he may have realized how heavy a blow the Dutch scholar had struck at what was to become Protestantism. Although the driving force of the Reformation had been irritation against the clergy, the intellectual direction of the movement had been given by the "New Learning" of the humanists. With their scorn for

scholasticism, their close examination of ancient texts and their rediscovery of the historic sense they had set the fashion in literature and scholarship, making opposition to the official Church "the coming thing." Now, within two years after the first image-smashing in the Germanies, the most famous humanist north of the Alps who was also one of the greatest in Christendom had changed sides. A number of important German scholars promptly followed him. Although their sympathies were sometimes half pagan, and they disliked many things in the Catholicism of their day, still they found the old Church more to their tastes than what seemed to them a narrow fanaticism which was inspiring social disorder. Even at the moment, it made a great difference to European opinion to know that a man might be able to read Greek and write elegant Latin and yet have no use for religious revolt. The reforming movement was by no means defeated; it already had too much political momentum for that. Nevertheless, as we look back upon the period, the first check to the Reformers came at the moment when Erasmus and the humanists who followed him decided to support instead of opposing tradition.

Erasmus himself was conscious of his own diminished fame. Also he saw that events were steadily drifting further away from his early hopes. Nevertheless he found a measure of peace in returning to the ancient faith whose more conservative adherents he had once so scandalized.

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Early in 1525 a considerable military and political success encouraged Charles to try again to have the Edict of Worms enforced against Luther. A few months before the Miner's Son's marriage the Emperor's generals destroyed a French army at Pavia and captured Francis I so that their master had Europe at his feet. Encouraged by this, the Emperor decided upon a second effort to outlaw heresy in the Germanies by means of a Diet which was to meet at Spire. Before the Assembly could meet, however, a new series of political misfortunes began when the great Turkish Sultan killed the King of Hungary in battle, destroyed his army at

Mohacs and retreated in triumph with a mass of enslaved prisoners, leaving behind him a Christian puppet king. Next Charles overplayed his hand with Francis I who while in prison signed a treaty renouncing the Duchy of Burgundy but on regaining his liberty allied himself with Suleiman and renewed the war—the first time that a Christian sovereign, in this case the “Very Christian” King of France, had made common cause with the infidel against another Christian Prince. Finally Clement VII who had submitted after Pavia came in on the French and Turkish side.

Charles’ error in dealing with Francis sprang from his genuine feeling for hereditary right. We saw earlier in this book that through his father’s mother he was heir to the great Dukes of Burgundy, that he had been brought up in rich Burgundian Flanders, and that in youth he had thought of himself chiefly as Burgundian. We also saw that the original Duchy of Burgundy in East-Central France, from which the splendid heritage of the Dukes had grown, had been taken from his grandmother by the French Royal House which had originally granted it to her great-great-grandfather.

To Charles the matter was simple. His ancestors the Burgundian Dukes were buried in splendidly sculptured tombs in the Church of Champmol near their capital of Dijon. In his first Will, made when he was twenty-two years old, he had directed that “If at the time of Our death *Our* Duchy of Burgundy shall have been reduced to obedience to Us” he wished to be buried there. His grandmother had been robbed of a fine piece of property that was as much hers as any other personal possession, and should therefore be his. Since the robber’s heir was now in his power he would make him disgorge.

This, however, neglected both French patriotism and the wishes of the inhabitants of that Duchy. In France it seemed intolerable that the Hapsburg—who then held Spain to the south, Cambrai and Arras to the north and Besançon to the east—should advance westward closer to Paris. When Francis broke his word, repudiated the harsh treaty which he had signed in prison and again made war, France strongly backed him. The Deputies of the Provincial “Estates” of Burgundy formally assured him that they wished to remain French.



Clement VII with some justice absolved him on the ground that his oath had been sworn under duress.

Before going to Spires the Lutheran-German Princes had agreed to refuse for the second time to move against the heresy which they themselves professed, and now after so many checks to the Hapsburg they repeated their refusal.

The French and Turkish forces, however, attempted nothing for several years, and late in 1527 an army of mutinous Imperialist mercenaries stormed Rome and only just failed to kill or capture the Pope. After Pavia the Emperor had called Clement "that villain," and had said "some day . . . Luther may become a man of worth" but had not acted against the Papacy now that he had the shifty Medici once more in his power, with his usual conservatism he again did nothing drastic. Instead he preferred to rejoice over the birth of an heir, afterwards Philip II of Spain, born to him by his beautiful Empress Isabella of Portugal. Incidentally, during the festivities he delighted his Spanish subjects by engaging in a bull-fight, killing his bull from on horseback with a lance. When the mutineers returned to obedience their generals secretly allowed the unhappy Pope to escape from the castle of Saint Angelo to Orvieto.

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In that little city agents of the King of England laid before Clement what Bishop Creighton within living memory called—with studied understatement—"a troublesome piece of business."

## *IX. Charles' Aunt versus Royal Theologian*

WHEN a tidal current is about to change there is often an intermediate period of cross-currents before the new current begins to run steadily. Sometimes during this period the water will already be rushing in on one side of a little island while, on the surface at least, it is still running out on the other side.

So it was from 1527 when Clement VII received the English agents at Orvieto to 1545 when the Council of Trent first met.

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Two new figures now join Charles in the center of our stage: his aunt Catherine of Aragon now forty-two years old, and her learned, devout and extremely pro-papal husband Henry VIII of England, now thirty-six years old, to whom she had been married nine years before. For another nine years, while the Spanish adventurer Pizarro in Peru was adding another rich American empire to Charles' already vast possessions, the royal English theologian was to be the central figure in the religious quarrel.

Although the familiar charge that Henry founded the existing Church of England is wholly false—among other reasons because it conveniently overlooks the submission of England to Rome in the reign of his daughter Mary—nevertheless had he not broken with the Pope the Counter-Reformation might have won a complete victory throughout Europe.

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Unless we grasp what kingship meant in Henry's day we cannot begin to understand him. All kings were then in politics up to their necks, compelled to decide all high policy, domestic and foreign. They freely chose and dismissed their

advisers, agents, judges and all magistrates except those of municipalities. They nominated bishops and archbishops, and usually the Pope's approval was a mere formality. The Sixteenth Century English Parliament was a wholly subordinate branch of the government which hardly ever successfully opposed the monarch in any important matter; its function was little more than that of registering and approving the royal will. To think otherwise is to read history backward. Henry owed certain vague obligations to the Pope, but the moral claim which has been the essence of the papal power had long been weakened by the corruption to which we have been so often forced to refer. He had indeed sworn to observe the customs and liberties of his kingdom, and he could not outrage public opinion beyond a certain point without risking rebellion, but within wide and not always strictly defined limits his authority was absolute.

The nature of that authority differed profoundly from that of any elected magistrate because it was permanent. Also kings reigned not by the will of man but by the Grace of God. When the coronation oil had been poured upon Henry's head by his Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primate or First Churchman of his kingdom, he had become God's Anointed, a sacramental figure, consecrated to the service of his people and bound to lead them in war and to lay down his life in their defense if need be. Kings were almost worshipped; the outward marks of respect which were their daily routine would sicken a man of today—except perhaps a Communist dictator.

Finally, Henry's subjects were far more united than those of Francis or Charles; he himself had been crowned before Castile and Aragon had finally come together, and although French patriotism was already strong, French unity was still imperfect, while England had been ruled as a single realm for more than half a thousand years.

At the same time Henry knew himself to be surrounded by danger. Although he would be King while he lived, he might be killed. In less than a century three of the eight kings who had preceded him—Richard II, Henry VI and Edward V—and two heirs to the throne—Henry VI's son and Edward V's younger brother—had been murdered. A

fourth King—Richard III—had fallen in battle against rebels. The whole period had been a welter of treacheries, usurpations and civil wars throughout which the Crown had been kicked about like a football by the local magnates, each of whom could hire mercenaries or persuade his dependents to follow him.

Henry Tudor, afterwards Henry VII and Henry VIII's father, had had no real hereditary claim to rule, for the English royal blood which he had in the female line was tainted with bastardy and in the male line was French and almost certainly bastard as well. He had been put up to oppose the unpopular government of Richard III, and had defeated that last genuine Plantagenet King, thanks to the timely assistance of one of Richard's chief supporters who had changed sides at the opportune moment. Afterwards the victor had somewhat strengthened himself by marrying a daughter of Edward IV, so that their son, Henry VIII, was at least of the legitimate blood royal on his mother's side, but there were no less than five men of Plantagenet stock in England who had as good an hereditary right to reign as the young Tudor.

Further, Henry VII had been unable to redeem his tainted ancestry by personal magnetism or courage in battle. He had been cunning, cruel and avaricious. Also he had been religious in the odd, superstitious fashion of the later Middle Ages and had never quarrelled with the Church. But his position had been so weak that—in spite of the national fatigue after so much turmoil—he had twice been seriously threatened by claimants to the throne, although the assertions of one of them had been absurd. Such was the atmosphere in which Henry VIII had grown up, with the insecurity of his father and the violent deaths of so many of that father's immediate predecessors always before him.

Moreover all but the worst followers of the cynical trade of politics have at least a minimum of good motives. Consequently they may honestly say to themselves; if by doing this or that dirty trick I can keep my power, the community will be spared much greater evils which will come if I am defeated. Any normal hereditary monarch will not only wish to preserve himself and his descendants, but also to ensure



the peace and tranquillity of his people by so doing. Time was to show that when the Royal Theologian saw a chance to strengthen his position, and still more whenever he felt himself threatened, he would let few scruples stand in his way.

The young Prince first appears in history as an exuberant child of ten, dancing at his brother's wedding so strenuously that he threw off his heavy surcoat and amused the company by leaping about in his underclothes. Within a few months that brother was dead, leaving him heir to the throne. Before he was twelve his mother died, and until his father's death, six years later, he led a cloistered life in the palace which he was never allowed to leave except for exercise in the palace park.

He grew up strong and thick in body. His round face was somewhat heavy, but his growing red beard curled pleasantly and the expression of his pursy little mouth was genial. "Bluff King Hal" he was later to be called. As a boy, ambassadors had noted his fine horsemanship and his zest for physical exercises. As a young man, in addition to aristocratic accomplishments like tilting with the lance in tournaments, galloping all day after the stag hounds and playing tennis of the sort now called court tennis or real tennis, he also loved popular sports like archery and wrestling. He was a musician, a composer of music and something of a poet, and he was learned in languages even for that learned age. He had even developed a taste for theology—that furthest reaching out of the mind into the mysteries that surround our lives from birth to death. He was zealous for the Catholic Faith, heard Mass several times a day even when that meant getting up before daylight in order to hunt, and throughout life he especially revered the Sacrament. But for the moment his chief desire was to amuse himself.

We noted in Chapter VI how delighted his subjects were when this lively and brilliant young man became King in 1509, after his father's cautious, economical and somewhat gloomy reign. Now money would be spent, and there would be merry-making and adventures.

He promptly married his dead brother's widow—Catherine—a political decision advised by the elderly councillors

whom he had inherited from his father. A Spanish alliance was the best safeguard against France which had a recruiting field five times that of England and also had an alliance with the Scots. He had been engaged to the Spanish Princess when he was twelve, and now at eighteen he was probably willing enough. At his age there is no reason why one should not find a bride of twenty-four desirable.

On the other hand a theological objection to the marriage had had to be brushed aside. There was an ugly text in the Twentieth Chapter of Leviticus which forbade marriage with a deceased brother's wife. In the English Authorized Version, it runs: "And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless." Of course the irregularity had been smoothed over with sweeping papal dispensations, but these might not be effective, for the Church's dispensing power applied only to those of her rules which her officers had made in their human wisdom. Not even the Pope could license anyone to commit an act which according to Divine Law was a sin, and such a marriage might be the sin of incest, like a brother and sister marriage. Pope Julius II, who had given the dispensations in question, had himself had his doubts, and so had Archbishop Warham of Canterbury.

For some years the marriage was happy. Catherine, a smiling, dumpy little blonde who during her nine years in England since her first husband's death had been unkindly treated by Henry VII and left penniless by her parents, fell in love with her young bridegroom and entered fully into his many amusements. At the same time her piety, simplicity and goodness made her generally popular. At first she influenced foreign policy in favor of her father, Ferdinand, but even when that selfish trickster repeatedly sold out English interests she was not blamed.

As time went on, however, Catherine continued to fail in the first duty of a Sixteenth Century Queen, which was to provide a male heir and preferably more than one. Within ten years she had at least two miscarriages, three still-born children and two who promptly died. For Henry, the son of a usurper, this was serious. As early as 1514, when a little girl named Anne Boleyn can hardly have been over fourteen

and was almost certainly two or three years younger, there was already talk of annulling his marriage. Two years later the Queen bore a Princess who lived to be known in history as "Bloody Mary," but in spite of another series of Catherine's pregnancies no other child of hers survived. Her repeated misfortunes deformed her, and grief aged her still more. Meanwhile Henry drifted into affairs with various women, one of whom gave him syphilis, then a prevalent and incurable disease. With his strong constitution his general health did not promptly collapse. Nevertheless the infection contributed to Catherine's second series of failures and may have helped to provoke the later ones of her first series, although infantile mortality was then terrific even with healthy parents. The unhappy Queen became physically repulsive to her husband so that he ceased to live intimately with her, but for some years he still gave her the public position due to her rank.

Meanwhile a low-born priest named Wolsey—the son of a grazier or cattle dealer, but energetic, able and ambitious—had gradually become chief Minister, organizer of amusements and boon companion to the King. By the time of Princess Mary's birth when the Royal Theologian was twenty-five and Wolsey forty-one the latter was a cardinal with an income socially equivalent to that of a multimillionaire today. He was Archbishop of York, Bishop of the wealthy diocese of Winchester, holder of various other rich clerical posts and Lord Chancellor of England. When the Pope made him Legate for life in England he practically exercised all ecclesiastical and civil powers in the kingdom, thus accustoming the English to seeing their Church governed by a Minister of the Crown living among them. His household expenses alone equalled a twentieth part of Henry's revenue, and his outward magnificence astonished even that splendor-loving time.

On the other hand Wolsey depended entirely on Henry's favor. For the moment he delighted his extravagant master by raising taxes so as to multiply the latter's income by four and finally by ten. There was, however, one matter which he could not control: the Pope and the Pope alone was sole judge of all legal questions concerning royal marriages.

Like many other great Sixteenth Century Churchmen Wolsey had a mistress or "unofficial wife" but he kept her in the background, providing adequately but not extravagantly for her and her bastards.

In two ways he unknowingly foreshadowed the future. To perpetuate his name, he suppressed thirty small monasteries, distributing their inmates in other monastic foundations and using their endowments for new colleges which he founded. His agent in the matter was a certain Thomas Cromwell.

When Luther went over the edge into heresy Wolsey and Henry had his books publicly burned. The Royal Theologian, in answer to the Miner's Son's assertion in the *Babylonian Captivity of the Church* that there are only two certain sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, with Penance a doubtful third, wrote an *Assertion or Defense of the Seven Sacraments*, maintaining in the full tradition of both the Latin Church and the Eastern Orthodox that Penance, Confirmation, Marriage, Holy Orders and Extreme Unction are also mysterious means of Divine Grace.

The King's book was well written. We who know his future may indeed be astonished at his approval of monks and at the zeal with which he celebrates both the permanence of marriage and the Pope's authority. Nevertheless he scores repeatedly and effectively against the Wittenberger's inconsistencies and shifts of opinion. The essence of his argument is in the chapter on Holy Orders. Luther had written: "The Church"—meaning the Church in her corporate capacity—" . . . can discern the Word of God from the word of men." Henry comments that this corporate power must include both the ability "to distinguish between the false and the true sense of true Scripture" and the "power to discern between Divine institutions and the traditions of men." Therefore, he concludes, Holy Orders are a sacrament because the Church says that they are so.

Leo X was delighted, and shortly before his death made the King of England "Defender of the Faith," in Latin "Defensor Fidei." Parliament afterwards voted this originally papal title to Henry's heirs in perpetuity, and it is held by the Kings and reigning Queens of England to this day.



Within two years after becoming "Defender of the Faith" Henry was taking action with regard to a Miss Anne Boleyn or Bullen, the daughter of a rich London merchant whose father and grandfather had both married noblewomen. Her paternal grandmother had belonged to a great Irish family. Her mother had been a Howard of the semi-royal line whose head was Duke of Norfolk. The Duke of the moment was her uncle. Socially, therefore, she ranked with the Howards.

She fascinated men—and that, it seems without beauty of face or body. She was of middle height with black hair, a somewhat swarthy complexion and a lively manner. Beyond this we are lost in the controversies which still whirl around her. Her portrait by so good an artist as Holbein gives her a long, slim neck and an undistinguished face with a cold expression. A Venetian diplomat said that her mouth was wide and that she was somewhat flat-chested. A Nineteenth Century enemy called her tall and sallow as if jaundiced, with a projecting tooth under her upper lip, a large wart or wen under her chin which she used to hide under high collars, and a sixth finger on her right hand. Professor Mattingly gives her "a rudimentary sixth finger on her left hand," but says "it was only a tiny blemish, and she had learned to manage so well with gloves in the folds of her dress that many people never noticed it at all." The French Abbé Constant reduces the deformity to "a slight defect on one of her nails" but—in a truly Gallic spirit!—calls her "the angular type of Anglo-Saxon."

In any case, a blemish like hers was then superstitiously considered the mark of one who had the evil eye, perhaps a witch or sorceress in league with the Devil.

After all this, one wonders what her strange charm was. Apparently she had fine black eyes. Certainly she had beautiful French manners, for she had been brought up at the French Court and could speak both French and Italian. A contemporary French poet—reversing Professor Constant's judgment—wrote that she was so graceful that no one would have believed her English. She may have had a lovely voice. Her family type may already have attracted Henry, for there were stories—now no longer believed in the case of her

mother but often accepted in that of her elder sister Mary—that both had been his mistress.

Henry may first have met Anne at a certain country house of which the red brick walls and large *porte-cochère* still stand in the east of England, a mansion of the sort which was just beginning to replace the gloomy Medieval castles. Wolsey, whose blundering diplomacy was usually pro-French, may have thrown her in his master's way in the hope of weakening Catherine's pro-Spanish influence. In any case, in 1522 or 1523 the Royal Theologian broke off her engagement to the heir of one of the greatest nobles in England, the son of the Percy who was Earl of Northumberland. The young man complained so bitterly that strong pressure had to be put upon him both by Wolsey and by his own father. Henry, however, may as yet have meant merely to use her politically by marrying her to a distinguished Irishman. Within the next few years, however, the King fell under her spell, tried to make her his mistress but failed because of her firm refusal, then began to consider the annulment of his marriage to Catherine. Anne was determined not to sell herself cheaply. Whatever coaching she had from her father and the Howard clan, she herself led throughout the drama that was to follow, and she must have been the first to judge that she could make Henry go to all lengths. She determined with an iron will that she would not be his harlot but his Queen.

One of the most astonishing stories in history followed. The cold-blooded skill and persistence with which Anne managed to refuse full satisfaction to her lover for at least six years and yet kept his devotion to her at white heat could hardly be believed were it not so well attested. She has been compared to an imaginary fisherman who landed a whale with a light rod and silken line. Strangest of all is the conduct of Henry. With any number of attractive women within easy reach, had he been only lustful he could have satisfied his appetite many times over. Throughout those years he seems never to have looked at any other woman. Ordinarily ruthless and single minded whenever political advantage was to be gained, here he was ready to take a risky step for the doubtful prospect of a male heir.

The risk which the infatuated King of England was running was due to the success of Catherine's nephew Charles on the Continent. As we saw in the last chapter Charles was absolute master of Italy and especially of Pope Clement VII who by Canon Law was judge of matters concerning royal marriages. Moreover Clement by allying himself with France had deeply offended the Emperor who with his strong family feeling would have thought himself dishonoured if he had not stood by a woman of his house.

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It has been endlessly repeated that Henry desired a divorce, but that was by no means true in the present meaning of the word. Today a divorce court says, in effect, to the two people concerned: your marriage was according to law but we now break the bond. Nothing of the sort had then been done in Western Europe for many centuries. Only the Church Courts had jurisdiction, and there could be no suggestion of dissolving a marriage which had been valid from the beginning. Such an idea would have been too shocking to be tolerated. Church Courts could not and cannot today dissolve a marriage by divorce in our sense. Their only means of doing so was and is by annulment, which is in legal theory a very different thing. A decree of annulment practically says that no true marriage has resulted from the marriage ceremony. Either some circumstance previously existed which, had it then been known to all concerned, would have prevented the ceremony from taking place; or else something has since happened—for instance from the beginning one party may have refused to live with the other physically as husband or wife—which shows that the intention to make a true marriage was always lacking, and therefore both parties are free to marry again.

Of course annulment, like any other legal principle, could and can be abused by trickery or downright fraud. For centuries before Henry's time it had often been abused by powerful people who had influence. Only a few years before he applied to Clement VII, the Borgia Pope Alexander VI had shamelessly annulled the marriage of Louis XII of

France. Both of the Royal Theologian's sisters had been given their freedom. Usually the thing was a routine matter. Lawyers could find many good or at least superficially good reasons for doing what was desired, both parties ordinarily consented to the separation, and the Decree of nullity customarily added that the children of any marriage "entered into in good faith" were legitimate although the marriage had afterwards been annulled.

In Henry's case, however, Catherine uncompromisingly refused to agree. She was the only human being who sincerely loved him, and she persisted in thinking him misled by bad advisers. Also she was a Spanish Princess, and would not consent to what she considered dishonor to herself and her daughter. Her marriage to the dead Prince, she insisted, had never been consummated. She had come virgin to Henry. She was his lawful wife, and would remain so.

Her resistance brought her nephew Charles into the game.

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Henry's opening moves can be explained only by his enormous vanity. He first tried to bypass the Pope and trick Catherine by having Warham and Wolsey preside over a collusive suit for annulment on the ground of living in sin with a dead brother's wife. The Queen was to be summoned, but the summons was never to reach her so that she could be pronounced contumacious, i.e. wilfully disobedient. When she of course found out, the idea had to be dropped. Next the King, behind the back of Wolsey who was on diplomatic business in France, sent an inept agent to Rome to ask first for a dispensation to commit bigamy, then for another to permit him to marry Anne although her sister Mary had been his mistress! Even though lovelorn and monstrously vain, he should have seen the folly of bringing in Mary before he was free to marry Anne and the greater folly of asking for bigamy. In France, however, the agent consulted Wolsey who had believed that his master meant to marry a French princess, which would have suited the Cardinal's policy. Hoping that Henry's passion for Anne would be a passing fancy, Wolsey persuaded the King's agent to drop



the idea of bigamy. Instead the Pope was asked to promise in writing that when Henry sued for annulment the case should be decided in England without an appeal to Rome, and also to grant a dispensation permitting what would otherwise have been according to canon law an incestuous marriage to Anne because of Henry's "affinity" to her on account of his illicit sexual intercourse with her sister. The Cardinal said at the time that the second dispensation was merely to safeguard in every possible way—presumably even from baseless rumors—the legitimacy of the offspring expected from the intended marriage. The whole story, as the Abbé Constant twice notes, is very strange.

Even that Mary had been Henry's mistress seems not altogether certain since the talk about her included the improbability of making her mother equally guilty of adultery with the King. Moreover Catherine with her many English well-wishers must have heard the stories about Anne's sister, and had she believed them she surely would have used so effective a weapon, but in all her letters of fierce denunciation she never mentions Mary. Also Henry's cousin Reginald Pole—to whom we shall return—in the first version of his book against the King, written seven years afterwards in 1535, does not speak of Mary but mentions her only in a later edition.

At all events Henry's agent reached Rome when Clement VII was besieged in the Castle of St. Angelo, and shortly after the Pope's escape to Orvieto was received by him there. Clement granted the secondary matter of the dispensation for "affinity" but deceived Henry's messenger by redrafting the proposed promise to hear no appeal from the English Court's decision on the crucial point of the annulment.

As soon as Wolsey had the document in his hands he saw that the redrafting had destroyed the guarantee against an appeal by Catherine to the Pope who was now in Charles' power. The Cardinal was hated in England for his high taxes, and was both hated and despised by the English nobles as an upstart. Consequently on returning from France he found that in order to save himself he must play Anne's game, since her influence with the master who was his sole support was

now all-powerful. Therefore, although full of forebodings, he did his best to pin down the shifty Medici.

This time the chief agent was an able priest, Stephen Gardiner, a learned canon lawyer, already experienced in official business and a man who could be either subtle or bold. Henry as well as Charles could play upon Clement's fears, for the English, although orthodox and deeply attached to the Mass, hated clerical and especially papal taxation as did the Germans. Accordingly an anti-papal move would have the nation behind it. Gardiner was therefore authorized to threaten an English schism, i.e. to say in substance to the unhappy Pope: If you refuse our Sovereign, England will break with the Papacy—at least for the time being. Professor Constant writes that the quarrel over Henry's marriage "alienated from Rome the only power capable of holding in check the forces working against the Church."

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Reaching Orvieto in March, 1528, Gardiner contemptuously wrote that the dilapidated town might well be called *Urbs Vetus* (in Latin "Old City"). "The Pope lieth in an old palace . . . , ruinous and decayed, where . . . (before) . . . we come to his privy bedchamber we pass three chambers, all naked and unhanged (i.e. with the walls not covered by cloth hangings or tapestries), the roofs fallen down, and, as we can guess, thirty persons, riffraff and other, standing in the chambers for a garnishment. And as for the Pope's bedchamber, all the apparel in it was not worth twenty nobles, bed and all."

The English delegation strenuously debated day after day for hours with the unhappy Clement. They began by citing three errors in Pope Julius' original dispensation: it said that Henry had asked for it when he had not, and when he had also been too young to act; that it had been issued as a favor to Henry VII and Isabella of Castile who had both died before the marriage; and that its purpose had been to keep peace between England and Spain when in fact no war had threatened. Finally Henry had subsequently protested against it, so that a new dispensation should have been asked for and granted before the ceremony took place.

The Pope was therefore asked to sign two documents; first an authoritative statement of the Canon Law on such matters and a Commission to judges to examine the facts in England; second a promise "on the most sacred word of a Pope" that no appeal from the judgment pronounced there would be heard in Rome since Henry was in the right. Clement countered with amiable delay, making fine promises but not confirming these in writing. When reminded that some believed that by divine inspiration the Pope had all knowledge locked within his breast, he wittily answered that God must have forgotten to give him the key to the lock. Gardiner then three times played his trump card. Twice he threatened schism in veiled terms. The third time he said roundly that when it was known in England how Henry was being treated, the Chair of Peter, already tottering, would fall to pieces amid general applause.

It was now after midnight. There was the devil to pay in Germany, and even the orthodox Francis had been talking about a "Patriarchate of the West" independent of Rome. In Gardiner's words, the tired Clement, "casting his arms abroad, bade us put in the words we varied for, and therewith walked up and down the chamber, casting now and then his arms abroad, we standing in great silence."

In fact the Medici Pope was only making a new low in duplicity. He had no intention of honoring his signatures.

At the suggestion of the English, Clement appointed as Wolsey's co-judge an Italian Cardinal named Campeggio—he was absentee Bishop of Salisbury and might hesitate to risk his English income—at the same time secretly ordering him to play for time and on no account to give a final decision. He also commanded Campeggio not to let out of his hands the document embodying the papal promise to hear no appeal, to show that document only to the King and Wolsey, and probably to destroy it after doing so.

The Italian Cardinal reached England only in October. There he began by trying to persuade Henry to change his mind, but found the Tudor unexpectedly learned. He wrote: "In this case His Majesty, . . . I believe, knows more than any great theologian or jurist." He and Wolsey next interviewed Catherine but could do nothing with her. She thought it all

a matter of simple justice, also that Henry would give way if the Pope decided for her. She was popular and was cheered in the streets while the Cardinals were booed, but when the King ordered her to seclude herself she obeyed.

In February, 1529, Clement fell ill and was reported to have died, which if true would have ended Campeggio's commission. Proceedings were therefore suspended. When the Pope recovered there was still another delay because Charles claimed to have discovered a "Brief" or second dispensation from Leo X to Isabella of Castile, the Emperor's grandmother and Catherine's mother, authorizing the marriage of Henry and Catherine in spite of all possible omissions or errors in Julius II's original dispensation. This "Brief" was to hold good even if the dead Prince Arthur and Catherine had consummated their marriage. Accordingly if genuine it would have destroyed Henry's legal case except as to the extent of the papal dispensing power—which the King was not yet prepared to challenge. He therefore claimed that it must be a forgery, and indeed its dating was somewhat suspicious. When Charles, secretly warned by Catherine that the English might destroy the original of the "Brief" if it were sent to England, kept it safe in Spain, Campeggio's last excuse for not opening court disappeared.

In June, 1529, fifteen months after Clement's original promise at Orvieto, the first hearing was held. The one point seriously argued was the consummation of Catherine's first marriage. The presumption was strongly against her, for she had been seventeen and Prince Arthur fifteen and she admitted that in the four months before his death they had been seven times bedded together. In the great hall of the London Dominicans, before the two Cardinals in their scarlet robes, Henry on a raised seat and a crowd of notabilities including all the English bishops, the Queen entered—a short, bent figure, leaning on the arm of a gentleman-in-waiting. Kneeling before Henry she reminded him of their twenty years together and her perfect obedience as a wife. "And when ye had me first," she said, "I take God to be my judge, I was a true maid without touch of man. And whether this be true or not, I put to your conscience." She long remained kneeling while he said nothing. At last she rose,



courtesied deeply to him without a look at the Cardinals and walked slowly out, ignoring a second summons. She had already appealed to the Pope.

A second great scene was played by John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, a distinguished Humanist and friend of Erasmus, also a famous preacher venerated for his ascetic life. He had been Henry's tutor. Before all the bishops the aged Archbishop Warham read off their names which he said they had signed to a statement in support of the King. At Fisher's name the latter suddenly rose, a tall bony man with a pointed jaw and deep eyes. Taking his life in his hands, he said: "That is not my hand and seal." Warham who was trying to protect him against Henry's anger said that Fisher had indeed refused to sign at first but had at last consented. "All of which," the Bishop answered, "under correction, my lord, is untrue."

The final moment of high drama was provided by Campeggio. When the Court met late in July everyone expected a verdict. Instead the Cardinal rose and said, in substance: This is a Roman Court and must therefore follow Roman rules. In this season Roman Courts go on vacation, so we shall not meet again until October.

Presently word came that the Pope had broken his promise to Henry by consenting to hear Catherine's appeal to himself.

It would be wasting words to enlarge upon Clement's cowardice and baseness. Froude speaks of "The Vicar of Christ . . . spinning like a top under the alternate lashes of the King of England and the Emperor," and continues with an example of how sharp Charles' lash might be. When in Rome a certain Cardinal spoke disparagingly of the Hapsburg sovereign, the Spanish Ambassador to the Vatican wrote to his master: "I did not call upon his Holiness but sent him a message . . . that if it ever came to my notice that the same Cardinal, or any member of the College (i.e. of the College of Cardinals) had dared to speak in such an indecent manner of the Emperor, I took my most solemn oath that I would have him beheaded or burnt alive in his own apartment. I had this time refrained out of respect for his Holiness; but should the insult be repeated I would not hesitate. They might do as they pleased with their Bulls and other rogueries

(in Spanish 'bellaquerias') . . . but they were not to speak evil of Princes. . . ."

With Spanish garrisons all around, the threat was not an empty one. Recently during the sack of Rome Spanish soldiers had indeed maltreated cardinals. Clement did not even dare to resent so insulting a message.

The one partial excuse for so cowardly a trickster in so high an office is that he was like a hunted animal uncertain which way to run. The same Ambassador was also suggesting to Charles to take all temporal power away from the Pope and the Clergy as the Lutheran Princes were doing in the Germanies. Shortly after the sack of Rome two years before, the Imperial Ambassador to the Republic of Genoa had not only suggested but advocated doing some of the things which the German Lutherans were doing, adding that the Lutherans were mistaken only in points of faith. Anti-papalism was in the air. But even in Clement's helplessness he might have saved some shreds of papal dignity.

In England Henry turned savagely upon Wolsey, disgracing his unpopular but faithful servant who died of a broken heart just in time to save himself from execution on trumped-up charges of treason. Erasmus' friend More became Chancellor, and Wolsey's former agent Thomas Cromwell somehow found employment in the King's service.

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Meanwhile early in 1529 a Turkish threat to the Germanies forced Ferdinand, acting for Charles, to continue his concessions to the Lutheran Princes. The Emperor's directions to his brother were once more to have a German Diet take steps against heresy and as a preliminary Charles formally revoked the Spires "Recess" to which he had agreed three years before. At the same time the new Assembly was to be asked to vote military assistance to the Hapsburg forces since the Sultan was known to be mobilizing a large army which was to move up the valley of the Danube towards Vienna. Incidentally Ferdinand, although he had been elected King of Bohemia and of Hungary was being opposed by rebels in the first kingdom and in Hungary where he

could only hold a strip of territory against the Turks and their Christian puppet.

When the Diet met for the second time at Spires the two Hapsburg objectives threatened to cancel each other out. For the third time a determined minority of Lutheran Princes enriched by having confiscated Church properties in their States, was joined by a majority of religious conservatives of whom most were timid while all were opposed to giving the Imperial government any real power. Clement, who had recently returned to Rome after being browbeaten by Gardiner at Orvieto, sent a Legate to Spires to announce that the Pope was about to call a General Council in accordance with Charles' wishes. The essence of the situation, however, was that neither the Hapsburgs nor the German religious conservatives were strong enough militarily to overawe or coerce the Lutherans. Indeed the Hapsburgs urgently needed military help against Suleiman. Since that help must come first, the recess must be allowed to stand, and the immediate problem was to find some formula which might save face for all parties.

The Diet of Nuremberg in 1523 had proposed "A Free Christian Council" to settle the religious question. Whatever the Lutherans meant by "Free," to the conservative majority it must have meant merely a Council free from papal control, one which, like the Fifteenth Century Reforming Councils, would represent not so much the Head of the Church as her Body. This had reopened the vexed question of the respective powers of Councils and Popes. The first Spires Diet of 1526 had phrased the demand more radically by adding that should there be no General Council then the religious question was to be dealt with by a "German National Council." Meanwhile "no new religious innovations or resolutions were to be proposed," and until further notice the "Estates," that is the local governments, "would rule . . . as each one thought right before God and the Emperor." The proposal for a "German National Council" on religious matters threatened to replace Catholic universality with localism—one can hardly say "with nationalism" since German nationalism did not politically exist. The Empire included not only German but also Italian, French and Slavic-speaking districts. "A

National Council" probably also implied the further innovation of lay as well as clerical voting.

The phrase "as each one thought right before God and the Emperor" lent itself to widely different interpretations but it might well have been argued that anyone's duty to God should override allegiance to any earthly sovereign. The German Lutherans now had a document to which they could appeal with at least some appearance of right.

At Spire in 1529 the Diet repeated the demand that their nominal ruler should arrange for "A Free General Council" to meet within one or at most two years. Both parties even went into detail as to where that Free Assembly should meet. Obviously all Germans feared that in Italy, if the voting were to be by individual bishops in the traditional way, a majority of extremely pro-papal Italian bishops would control. Accordingly the Diet said that the Council should be held either at Metz, Cologne, Mayence or some other German city. If no such Council were held, then Charles should summon and personally attend a full Diet.

In the hope of saving some of Charles' instructions, Ferdinand stipulated that Lutherans alone were to be tolerated, whereas the followers of the Swiss Reformer Zwingli and other so-called Sacramentarians who held that the Sacraments were only ceremonies incapable of conveying Divine Grace were everywhere to be persecuted, also Anabaptists, who were revolutionary Socialists as well as extreme religious radicals. Lutheran local Governments were ordered to tolerate individual religious conservatives in their States, whereas nothing was said about tolerating Lutherans in conservative States. But on the main point of Charles' instructions, the revocation of the "Recess," Ferdinand yielded. By this surrender the Hapsburgs gained fulsome promises from the Diet of military help against the Turk—which were at last partially kept. On the other hand, as far as German internal affairs were concerned the Diet of 1529 crystallized the religious opposition.

The word Protestant now comes into our story. The Lutherans were quite willing to promise to persecute Sacramentarians and really to act against Anabaptists—the idea that Sixteenth Century religious innovators were in any way



tolerant is of course mere moonshine. But in their own States they would not tolerate the ancient services in which they themselves had been brought up. Both the Lutheran Princes and the innovating Free Cities had forbidden the Latin Mass as Edward VI's government was about to do in England.

The stage setting of what followed is known. The main street of Spires runs straight like the earliest streets of Paris, recalling Rome and not the crooked streets characteristic of so many medieval towns. At its east end rises the dignified red sandstone mass of the round-arched early-Medieval cathedral, full of memories of the Eleventh Century Emperors. At its west end the pointed arch of the so-called "Old Gate" pierces through a high, square clock-tower of late-Medieval work with a steep, peaked roof. Just inside this gate there still stands, or stood before the ferocious air bombing of the war of 1939-45, a little inn, part of the structure of which may well be the same as that of one which stood there in 1529.

At this inn on April 19 the Lutheran Princes and the delegates of fourteen of the Free Cities of the Empire gathered. The chief Lutheran state was Electoral Saxony where Frederick the Wise—who had protected Luther in order to assert his own local independence but had never fully accepted religious innovations—had died in 1525 and had been succeeded by his brother John who was an enthusiastic innovator. The most radical and energetic Lutheran Prince, however, was Philip the Landgrave of Hesse, a German title superior to "Graf" which meant "Count." The portraits of John and Philip may not do them justice. It has been well said that at least one of the artists who often painted the early Lutherans was capable of making anyone look hideous. At all events, where Frederick the Wise apparently resembled a kindly and intelligent wild boar his brother John is shown with a strong family resemblance but with coarser features and a brutal expression. Philip of Hesse's pictures make him look like a domestic pig. To anticipate events, in February of the following year he actually wrote to Zwingli, regretting that the Turks had retreated without taking Vienna.

Whatever we think of these men, following them the other

Lutheran Princes and Delegates signed a "Protest" against the idea that they should leave in peace those under their authority who wished to worship as all the West had worshipped for centuries. The signers "protested" that they could not conscientiously consent to anything "opposed to God and God's Holy Word." They would, they said, abide by the "Recess" of three years before, which document, according to a peculiar legal theory of theirs—apparently never heard of before or since—could not be abrogated without their consent.

Of course the signers of the "protest" of 1529 could not have imagined the consequences of the movement to which they had unknowingly given a name. The idea of a lasting division within Western Christendom, the unhealed wound which still separates the Protestant culture from the Roman Catholic with all the economic, political and moral results of that wound, would have been unthinkable to them. What was to become the Protestant culture had not begun to take definite form. It was still a ferment, boiling up here, there and everywhere. Calvin had not yet put forward his comprehensive scheme. So far, much of the indignation of the religious rebels had been directed against discipline and customs not fundamental to the Faith. In point of doctrine even their denial of transubstantiation may have seemed concerned with current doctrinal abuses rather than with the doctrine itself. Luther, who rejoiced that he had made the Papacy give ground although in the past it had humbled great German Kaisers, was at the same time zealous for the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist. Everyone was still thinking in terms of universality. That the so-called Reform which had begun by attacking clerical wealth and privilege would end by setting up lasting national and local churches would still have seemed an idea in the moon.

In this book the term "Protestant" is used sparingly because it implies the definitely Protestant culture of today which did not yet exist. Nevertheless the mere word was an omen.

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For four years, while Clement still hesitated and delayed, Henry began to break one by one the links between the

English Church and Rome and also took a new propaganda line suggested by a hitherto obscure priest, Thomas Cranmer, who urged an appeal to the universities on the theological point of marrying a brother's wife.

Cranmer, now about forty, was the younger son of a poor country gentleman. A Cambridge man and a Doctor of Theology, he was what Americans today would call professorial, Englishmen donnish, absorbed in his books and without ambition. As yet giving no sign of religious revolt, he had been quietly carried along by the current of the New Learning, and had turned from scholasticism to the Scriptures and the early Church Fathers. For years, he afterwards said, he had privately prayed for the abolition of papal power in England, but he had kept his ideas to himself. His early training had stressed the works of Duns Scotus, the so-called "Subtle Doctor," and throughout life he prided himself on seeing fine distinctions on both sides of many questions. Probably his talent for composing prayers in English was as yet unsuspected even by himself.

Cranmer walked into the limelight of history through a chance meeting with an old acquaintance, Gardiner, now Chaplain to the King, high in royal favor and soon to be the Bishop of the rich Diocese of Winchester. The King's Chaplain, going into the country in attendance upon Henry and Anne, was billeted in the same house in which Cranmer was staying. The obscure scholar believed Henry to be theologically correct on the marriage question, and also believed in the moral authority of learned men like himself. Let the King, said he, collect opinions from the universities of Christendom. They will agree that marriage with a deceased brother's wife is contrary to Divine Law and therefore outside the dispensing authority even of the Pope. Any Church Court can annul such a marriage, for the Pope himself will have to yield to the university professors.

Gardiner was impressed, and Henry, on meeting Cranmer, was delighted with him. "This fellow has got the right sow by the ear," the King said in the hearty manner which endeared him to his subjects. The quiet priest was sent to take the opinions of learned Italians and Germans, and in spite of his vow of celibacy he secretly married the niece of one of

the latter who was a part of the general movement known as Lutheran.

Incidentally, a married priest would have scandalized Henry's strange but sensitive conscience, so that Mrs. Cranmer's status had to be concealed.

Meanwhile another one of Henry's agents reported that any number of Jewish Rabbis would support the Royal Theologian's interpretation of Leviticus if paid twenty-four crowns apiece. In reality all this was shadow-boxing, for no Pope could admit that his predecessors had been mistaken as to the papal dispensing power. Moreover a limitation of that power would make a number of royal marriages incestuous, including the marriage between the father and mother of Charles V's Empress.

Politically and financially the Tudor and his advisers were led on step by step. First Henry accused the English Clergy of having consented to unlawful acts of Wolsey's which encroached on Royal authority but promised pardon for a large sum of money and a statement of his own power over the Church—which he and his predecessors had long enjoyed in practice. In a sweeping but not schismatic formula they voted him to be their "Singular Protector, only Supreme Lord and even Supreme Head as far as the law of Christ allows." In 1532 Parliament empowered the King to prevent the payment of Annates, a papal tax which took the first year's revenue from the bishoprics of newly elected bishops and archbishops—a threat not as yet to be acted upon. Next the House of Commons enthusiastically authorized a royally appointed committee to revise the English Canon Law. When the bishops in the House of Lords were able only to delay this change, More resigned the Chancellorship.

These measures were due to Cromwell who had risen to be Henry's agent in managing Parliament. A base-born man of about forty-five with little education, short and stocky, waddling in his walk and deceptively stupid looking, the new favorite was clear-headed, ambitious and unscrupulous. He had been a soldier in Italy, a money-lender's assistant and a small trader. Significantly, he had read Machiavelli.

Warham's death in 1532 gave Henry a chance to nominate a new Archbishop after his own heart. Gardiner, already



Bishop of Winchester, was the first Churchman in England but the King preferred the more pliable Cranmer. Anne was created a Marquis, not Marchioness, and richly endowed with lands which were secured to her descendants *legitimate or otherwise*. Now confident of becoming Queen, at long last she gave herself to her royal lover. In January, 1533, already pregnant, she was secretly married to Henry. In March the timid Clement confirmed Henry's nomination of Cranmer who was consecrated Archbishop.

Just before the consecration, however, a strange scene took place. No bishop or archbishop could be consecrated without first taking an oath to the Pope and another to the King, two loyalties which at the moment were certain to conflict. Since Edward I's time, more than two centuries before, candidates before receiving the temporal possessions of their bishoprics had formally renounced any words in their oath to the Pope which might be "offensive" to the royal authority. Henry V when permitting the consecration of an Archbishop of Canterbury had recorded that in his presence the candidate had renounced "all words in the said writing (i.e. in his oath to the Pope) prejudicial to us and to our Crown." Thus all English bishops had long implied that their oath to the King was paramount. Gardiner and two other recently consecrated candidates had definitely taken that position. If any Pope had ever objected, he had certainly never taken extreme measures.

Cranmer went further than his predecessors. Strype prints three forms of a "Protestation" in which he limited the allegiance which he was about to swear to the Pope, at least one of which he read privately before a notary and four witnesses, saying that he would not be bound "to do anything contrary to the laws of God"—which was undoubtedly meant to cover the King's suit for an annulment to the royal marriage, and that he would "speak freely" as to the reformation of religion. Also he enlarged upon the customary oath for the temporalities, adding to it that he held his Archbishopric of the King "immediately and only, and of none other." How far all this was really secret we cannot say. Cranmer himself said that after taking legal advice Henry had recommended such a "Protestation." The chief consecrator who was the

King's confessor can hardly have failed to know what was about to happen, and probably a number of others knew also.

Once consecrated, Cranmer acted quickly. He solemnly asked and received Henry's leave to examine the marriage question, held court near the country house to which Catherine had retired, condemned her as contumacious for refusing his jurisdiction, annulled her marriage but pronounced Princess Mary legitimate, and declared Henry's marriage to Anne valid—all within two months.

In June of 1533 Anne was crowned before sullen crowds which refused to cheer. In July Clement conditionally excommunicated Henry and declared his recent marriage to Anne invalid. Even then the King's first marriage was not finally declared valid; that case was still before the Papal Courts. Moreover the excommunication was not to take effect until September and only if Henry had not by that time put Anne away. In that month a Princess who was christened Elizabeth was born.

In the same month Clement died, after having once more allied himself with France by arranging the marriage of his niece Catherine de Medici with Francis I's heir. To the new Pope who was presently elected and took the name of Paul III we shall return in a later chapter.

In England in the following January a large majority of the clergy in Convocation proclaimed that "according to the Scriptures the Bishop of Rome hath no more power in England than any other foreign Prince and no more jurisdiction than any other foreign Bishop." At the same time Henry was too orthodox to claim any spiritual jurisdiction. Since the Latin Mass and all the traditional functions of the clergy continued as before, the common man—to whom the Pope was only a distant name—could see for himself that nothing in his own personal religious life was changed. To an earlier objector against a layman being in any sense "Head" of the Church, the Royal Theologian had forcefully answered that his power over the clergy was like his power over doctors of medicine. He was King over both although both could do specific things which he could not—a position not unlike that of the Orthodox Byzantine Emperors.

Meanwhile Francis' continued friendly and diplomatic relations with Charles were never more than briefly interrupted.

In England there was no general opposition to the wiping out of papal authority. As in other provinces of Sixteenth Century Christendom, there were plenty of domestic discontents. The peasants had grievances, some of them like and some unlike those of their fellows in the Germanies. The nobles, far better acquainted than the peasants with what was going on, understood the weakness of Henry's dynastic claim. A number of them intensely disliked the action taken against Catherine and the preferment of Elizabeth to Mary in the Act of Succession. But after the endless Wars of the Roses most Englishmen were sick of civil strife.

Finally, papal power was closely concerned with the legal immunities of the clergy which many laymen were glad to see abolished. As Professor Constant says, the breach with Rome was not tyrannously imposed upon the nation; the marriage question merely liberated the anti-clerical spirit hitherto kept in check by Henry.

It is true that to proclaim the Pope's authority or to deny the rightful succession of the baby Princess Elizabeth was now legally treason, for which the English punishment was so horrible that even in the increasing barbarism of our own time one dislikes writing it down. It was called hanging, drawing and quartering. The victim was first hanged, half strangled and cut down alive. His private parts were then cut off, his belly ripped open and his heart torn out. His head and four quarters into which his body was chopped were publicly exhibited as a warning to others. Only in the case of noblemen and others to whom the King wished to show mercy, execution was by beheading. All executions, including the burning of heretics, were public spectacles to which crowds went in a darker version of the same spirit which provides audiences for gangster films today.

Nevertheless the astonishing medieval willingness to face torture assures us that if the Pope's authority had been widely cherished there would have been more martyrs. There were very few. Fisher and More were beheaded, and eight Carthusians suffered the atrocious full penalty just described,

while certain other Carthusians and fifty Franciscan friars of the strict Observance died in prison of starvation and ill-treatment. The early Christians had faced death again and again, and even the vile Albigensian heresy had inspired its followers to heroic martyrdoms, but the England of 1534—after more than nine centuries of communion with the Papacy—parted from Rome without a sign of general emotion. There was no trace of any popular movement against Henry.

Even Fisher's death is not a clear case of martyrdom, for his own letters convicted him of treasonable conspiracy with foreign powers. All the other bishops formally renounced allegiance to the Pope. Some probably thought that the Church's unity was not permanently threatened, since Henry appealed to a future General Council as superior to the Papacy.

Significantly enough, even Sir Thomas More was to a considerable extent in agreement with this view although he laid down his life for unity through communion with the Pope, and was canonized by the Roman Catholic Church in 1935. He consented to swear to Princess Elizabeth's succession, for as a lawyer he held that the King could regulate that matter, but he would not accept the King's unqualified supremacy over the English Church.

One would gladly linger over the lovable and heroic More. The sternness with which so kindly a man had unrepentant heretics burned during his Chancellorship merely shows the great gulf between contemporary thinking and that of past times. For this book, however, he is important chiefly for the opinions on the respective powers of General Councils and of Popes which he carefully expressed in a long letter to Cromwell shortly before his own imprisonment. Strype's *Ecclesiastical Memorials* reprints it, and it is reproduced—very honestly as Maynard Smith truly says—by Father Thomas E. Bridgett, More's late Nineteenth Century Roman Catholic biographer.

As to the primacy of the Pope, More wrote that he had in no way meddled with that matter, probably meaning that he had not publicly taken any position concerning it. He scored a powerful debating point by noting that his former



belief in the human origin of the Papacy had first been disturbed by certain passages in Henry's book on the *Seven Sacraments*. He had, he said, tried to persuade his Master to omit or tone down those passages, since previous Kings of England had from time to time quarreled with Popes. Henry, however, had insisted, and after ten years of study More himself had come to agree with his Sovereign that God himself had made the Pope First Bishop over the Church, from whom no member of the Church may lawfully depart by breaking communion. More continued: since all Christendom—by which he meant all Western Christendom—is one body, it is futile to argue whether the papal primacy is derived from God or only from the human wisdom of the Church, unless a General Council should undertake to decide the question.

From this he passed to the powers of General Councils which, until the Vatican Council of 1870 accepted Pope Pius IX's declaration of his own infallibility, were the supreme Roman Catholic authority in defining faith and morals. Up to that time papal infallibility was a permitted opinion without dogmatic force, in the sense that no one could be excommunicated for denying it. In addition to the defining powers of a General Council, St. Thomas More went further and asserted a general power in such a Council to depose a Pope. If we modernize his spelling his words are: "For in the next General Council it may well happen that this Pope may be deposed and another substituted in his room, with whom the King's Highness may be very well content. For albeit that I have for mine own part such opinion of the Pope's primacy as I have showed you, yet never thought I the Pope above the General Council." Such language accepts the claim of the Council of Constance "that it derives the power immediately from Jesus Christ, unto which every person of whatsoever dignity, not excepting the Pope, is bound to yield obedience."

That a papal martyr who was also the greatest lawyer in England long believed the Papacy to have had a purely human origin, and to the end asserted a deposing power more sweeping than Roman Catholic theologians would accept today, throws a vivid light upon his time.

Meanwhile Cromwell, now Henry's principal Secretary, suggested increasing the extravagant and careless monarch's revenue by dissolving the smaller English monasteries. There was a strong case for partial suppression especially if accompanied by reform. Within a year Pope Paul III would make Contarini—by that time a Cardinal—President of a Commission which included two other Italian Cardinals, Henry's cousin the English Cardinal Pole and two Italian Archbishops, to draft a general plan for reform. That Commission would state that the religious orders had become so scandalous that all of them should be temporarily abolished, with due regard to existing personal interests. Better monks and nuns should then be put in. The fact was that throughout Western Christendom the monastic enthusiasm of earlier centuries had cooled. There were still fervent abbeys and nunneries but there were also considerable patches of vice and a still more prevalent slackness. When Henry accepted Cromwell's idea he and his secretary were about to take the first but not the last steps soon afterwards recommended by the Papal Commission.

The King's promises were excellent. The revenues of the suppressed Houses would be used for new bishoprics, university professorships and schools, and for reducing taxes. Monks and nuns wishing to continue as such were to go into the larger Houses which were not to be touched. There were to be generous pensions for the Heads of suppressed Houses, down payments for those who wished henceforward to live in the world and licenses for monks who were also priests to become secular priests serving parishes.

The government was after money, so the Royal Commissioners acted much as a Socialist government might if determined upon confiscating all large fortunes in order to speed up the present judicial robbery of the rich by income and inheritance taxes, or a Fascist government out to confiscate trade union funds. Similarly, Henry's agents raked up all the scandal they could about those who were to be attacked. Naturally those agents were cordially abused by the injured individuals. Their methods copied exactly those customarily used from time immemorial by Bishops when making disciplinary visits to monasteries.

The monastic houses suppressed in 1536 were those which had less than twelve inmates or a revenue of less than two hundred pounds a year. Most of them were not, strictly speaking, abbeys but priories or cells. As in regard to the Commissioners' methods of inquiry, Henry's face has been unjustly blackened by historians who have scornfully asked whether such tests were guarantees of good behavior. The point was that income was a rough but good guide to numbers, and for centuries it had been taken for granted that neither discipline nor the services prescribed by the rules of the various Orders could be properly kept up when numbers fell too low. Cardinal Gasquet, himself the Abbot-President of the English Benedictines of the Roman obedience, should have remembered that St. Benedict himself, a thousand years before Henry VIII's time, had made twelve monks a standard number, below which choir duties became impossible, and that the other Orders had followed suit. Orthodox disciplinarians had repeatedly thundered against the chronic laxity of smaller Houses. St. Bernard had described the small monastic "cells" of his day as "Synagogues of Satan."

The Act of Suppression was easily passed; the story that the Royal Theologian had to threaten the members is inconsistent both with his amiable way of managing parliament and with the known feeling of most laymen and secular clergymen against the monks, to say nothing of the obvious chance of fat pickings out of the confiscations. When his bidding had been done, the King dissolved Parliament in April, 1536.

In January of that year Catherine had died, firm in her religion, courageous to the end and still in love with Henry whose misdeeds she blamed on bad advisers. In the remote country house in which she was practically a prisoner she probably never knew that she was about to be horribly avenged.

Within a month after the dissolution of Parliament Henry had Anne tried and executed. After faithfully waiting six years for possession of her, when at last he had her he soon liked her less. He began to be casually unfaithful, whereupon she made scenes. He answered her roughly, and when her second child, a boy, was still-born she blamed his ill-treatment

for the disaster, while he began to say that she was a witch who had tricked him into marriage by unlawful arts. Before they had been married two years he was attracted by a new woman, Jane Seymour, the daughter of a country gentleman who was a minor court official, while Anne was certainly indiscreet with a number of young men. She may have given herself to one of the court musicians and to seven gentlemen including, so it was said, her own brother. She may have thought the King unable to father healthy offspring, and therefore turned to lovers in the hope of conceiving a vigorous child which could be passed off as royal. On the other hand such wild license, if real, looks more like a reaction against the iron self-control with which she had so long played her calculating game with Henry. At all events the accusation, together with her failure to bear a male heir, was enough for her husband. She, her brother and four of the six other men charged with being her lovers were beheaded. Less than a fortnight later the Royal Theologian was married to Jane Seymour.

With Catherine and Anne dead, no legal obstacle to reconciliation between England and Rome remained.



## X. Gothic Gaiety

DURING this chapter and the next we may interrupt our narrative of events in order to consider two notable books. In 1535, the year before the suppression of the smaller English Abbeys and the killing of Anne Boleyn, a French priest who was also a physician and had been a monk, Dr. Francis Rabelais, published the first datable edition of a serio-comic book called *Gargantua*.

The spirit of the Middle Ages had been two-faced like the Roman god Janus. On the one hand in the lives of their ascetic saints and in the heavenward aspiration of the pointed arches and the spires of their Gothic churches medieval men had embodied a strange sense of the unseen world all about us. On the other hand in their great period before their decline they had delighted in vivid color and in every sensuous pleasure, and had loved mockery and coarse masculine jests.

Just as the Gothic architecture lived on vigorously into a time which was about to be darkened by the black shadow of Calvin and by the nightmare of the religious wars, so in Rabelais, although he thought of himself as an innovator and a man of the new day, the gusto and the gaiety of the Thirteenth Century lived on. No other writer, as his editor Louis Moland truly says, has so recaptured the intense life of the Gothic gargoyles.



Some historians of architecture say that as early as the Fifteenth Century the Gothic was dying, and indeed it no longer rivalled the Thirteenth Century cathedrals. In France the designers of the later style known as the Flamboyant could make stone look like lace or could make it writhe in their window traceries, but nearly all their work had something strained about it like a beautiful woman wasted by

fever. In England the local style called the Perpendicular had stiffened somewhat, perhaps for the sake of cheapness. But if for a moment we try to forget Chartres, Reims and Amiens, and look only at, say, the nave of Canterbury and the Tour St. Jacques in Paris, they will show that the pointed style even in its decline could make aspiration visible in stone.

That Christian style remained vigorous up to the very moment when men began imitating pagan work. For more than a generation after Columbus' death, in northern Europe new pinnacles and pointed arches were still rising towards heaven, especially in England where Gothic architecture was actually murdered. When Henry VIII presently suppressed the greater monasteries as he had already suppressed the smaller ones, his agents found the monks still building in the traditional fashion. At Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire the scaffolding had hardly been removed from the delicate but dignified north tower. At Bolton Abbey in Lancashire a new western tower was rising. Yet work was not stopped at Bolton until 1540, six years after St. Ignatius had founded the Society of Jesus, four years after the first edition of Calvin's *Institutes* and more than a century after the first neo-pagan, classic colonnade had been set up in Florence.

In France just before the end of Gothic building, perhaps when the Tour St. Jacques was still surrounded by scaffolding and the air was full of the sound of mallet and chisel, certainly when the masculine vigor of the work showed the sharp outlines of freshly cut stone, an ugly little friar in the brown frock of the Franciscan Order, perhaps with a book or two under his arm, may have passed the site. Probably he knew the quarter well, for many copyists of books worked there—not yet put out of business by the printers. If he came often he must have sampled the good cheer of the neighbouring taverns, for he was François—in English Francis—Rabelais, that famous lover of wine who is one of the world's great masters of laughter. His joyous vitality reminds us of the glorious wealth of carved stone and stained glass which adorned the Gothic at its best.

Probably about 1490, Rabelais was born in the soft Touraine country at little Chinon, under the castle in which Joan of Arc recognized the disguised Dauphin, Chinon where the

people store their light and delicious wine in great cellars cut out of the soft rock. There is a doubtful story that he was tonsured as a cleric when he was only seven. By 1519 we find him already a Franciscan friar and a priest. He was perhaps unhappy in his convent, for five years later a powerful Bishop, who may have been a boyhood schoolmate of his, gained formal permission from Pope Clement VII for him to leave his Order and become a Benedictine monk—apparently his Franciscan superiors had tried to discourage his passion for study and especially for Greek. Something of St. Francis' doubts about the spiritual benefits of higher education may have survived in that particular friary.

Still restless and disliking the cloister like Erasmus before him, he left the Benedictines as he had left the Franciscans and put on the dress of a secular priest. Probably after studying medicine at the University of Paris, he went southward through the white dust of the Rhône valley to Montpellier, and again threw himself into the study of medicine at the famous school there. He must already have known much about his subject, since that old and great foundation gave him his Bachelor's degree after only six weeks, and soon had him lecturing publicly on Galen and Hippocrates. Also he did not neglect the lighter side of university life, for he records having acted in a "moral comedy" given by the students and entitled *The Man Who Married A Dumb Wife*. After receiving his doctor's degree, he continued to wander, incidentally inventing a new fish sauce. We find him next at Lyons as professor of Anatomy and chief doctor of an important hospital, and there he may have begotten a bastard son who died in infancy. Presently a French Cardinal, whose family he had known as a boy, took him along on a diplomatic mission to Rome, where in 1536 Pope Paul III gave him a second formal pardon for his ecclesiastical irregularities. In spite of this papal favor, certain letters which he wrote from Rome are full of distrust of papal diplomacy and of a typically French contempt for Italians. Still wandering, he went to Turin, then to Metz, always working at medicine, then to Rome again. On his return to France, his friend the Cardinal had made him Rector of the parish of Meudon near Paris where he is said to have served conscientiously for two years.

He resigned his benefice and died, probably in Paris and perhaps in 1553.

At Lyons, it seems, he began his great book, *The Lives, Heroic Deeds and Sayings of Gargantua and his Son Pantagruel*. Its first edition of known date was published in 1535, the year before the suppression of the smaller English monasteries, but an undated one had already appeared. Gargantua and Pantagruel were already names for giants in popular medieval stories, especially in Brittany, and there is a peak in the Pyrenees called Garganta. Shortly before beginning to write on his own account he had revised a short burlesque of the romances of King Arthur in which, besides Arthur himself and Merlin the magician, are found the names of Grangousier and Gargamelle, Gargantua's father and mother whom Rabelais' forerunner spells Grantgousier and Galemelle, and also the huge mare on which Pantagruel rode. Rabelais' own work continually alludes to little places near Chinon—like a true Frenchman, this wanderer's heart was always in his "petite patrie," the tiny patch of ground that he called his home. He must have had warm friendships, for every now and then he puts in the name of someone whom he knew, apparently for the mere pleasure of remembering the man.

His account of his good giants has little coherence. Sometimes he makes them gigantic enough, but he never faces the obvious difficulty that such creatures could not have used buildings designed for humans of normal size. The book meanders along like a winding river. The story is only an excuse, a stringing together of things to make us laugh with him, to display his varied learning and to express his opinions about almost everything under the sun. It is those opinions which make him interesting to us.

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He is coarse. Indeed in English the adjective "Rabelaisian" has come to mean a coarse joke about sex. That meaning is too narrow, for his jests often turn upon excretion or upon some other form of bodily indignity, but as far as it goes it is true enough. However, his coarseness is at least of a lively, hearty sort, worlds away from the gloomy dirt characteristic



of too many recent novels. He hardly ever mentions perversion—that dull and tedious subject which has intrigued a few great men and a rabble of pigmy scribblers. His obscenity has often been likened to the wholesome smell of stable manure.

After all there is an undeniably comic as well as a tragic side to the incongruity between our higher nature and our bodily functions. Chesterton notes somewhere how strange it is that man, who is made in the image of God, lives by stuffing alien substances into a hole in his head! The incongruity is even more violent in relation to certain other necessary physical acts. To prostrate oneself before one's physical desires, and to think of nature as a great, stern mother whose commands must always be obeyed, is pagan and not Christian.

Chesterton also observes that to St. Francis external nature was not a goddess but only a charming little sister, to be played with like a child. Paradoxical though it may seem to liken the lewd Rabelais to the Little Poor Man of Assisi, nevertheless the former's outlook on the world is only a very earthy version of the refusal to worship nature which we see in the great Saint whose habit he once wore.

Moreover it is typically medieval to be lacking in prudery. As we have seen, Gothic sculptors who gave us the unworldliness of their saints and virgins also gave us their grotesque, writhing gargoyles and their monsters like those lively demons in stone who leer down from high up on the west front of the Cathedral of Our Lady in Paris. Sometimes their comic spirit, not content with crawling over the outsides of their buildings, invaded the insides as well—for instance in the little stone demon who grins among the angels in the choir of Lincoln Cathedral. The comedy and satire of medieval popular literature everywhere is wholly uninhibited. For that matter most of the world's great masters of the comic spirit have loved broad jests. One remembers Aristophanes, Martial, Shakespeare himself, Racine when he turns to comedy, and Burns.

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At the same time Rabelais' learning is so fantastically varied as to remind us once again of the almost infinite wealth

of Gothic decoration. He keeps bringing in little scraps of curious knowledge for the fun of the thing. From some story which would have shocked most Twentieth Century stag parties, he turns easily to scholarly quotations which the modern reader—if he knows the original!—usually finds correct. He says little of the details of theology, never quotes the Fathers of the Church and seldom the Scriptures, but in many a branch of study he leads his readers a merry chase.

He delights in anatomical details and in drugs, although one suspects that some of the mixtures which he mentions were never brewed on earth. He quotes great chunks of the Pandects, Justinian's great Code of Laws, with chapter and verse. He is familiar with the theory of war and the economical strategy which the professional army of Imperial Rome bequeathed to the medieval West through Vegetius' *De Re Militari*—a book which he does not mention. Besides his Latin, he knows Greek and praises it above all other learned tongues. He values Hebrew for better understanding of the Old Testament, also the "Chaldean" language as the men of his time called the Aramaic which Our Lord presumably spoke, and Arabic for the sake of his medical studies. He has at least scraps of other languages.

He knows the Greek and Roman poets, dramatists, historians, geographers and naturalists. He quotes the ancient philosophers, especially Plato, more often than the medieval Schoolmen among whom he mentions St. Thomas less frequently than Duns Scotus, the favorite doctor of the decadent scholastics of his day. The names of the great Moslem thinkers Avicenna and Averroes appear in his pages, and he has at least heard of Vitruvius, the only surviving ancient writer on architecture, although he seems little acquainted with the latter's work. He has some acquaintance with Jewish studies, for he speaks of the strange book called the Kabbalah, also of the Massorets who were the medieval transcribers of the Hebrew Old Testament, and of Rabbi Ben Ezra, the learned Twelfth Century commentator on the Talmud afterwards celebrated by Browning. He mentions Rabbi Kimhi, although he may not have known that there were three famous scholars of that name. He quotes from Jewish sources a beguiling tale

of a good giant, Hurtali, who survived Noah's flood and became a remote ancestor of Grangousier the father of Gargantua. Apparently Hurtali was not mentioned in the Book of Genesis because he was not actually in the Ark, he was too big. He sat astride of the Ark's roof, and by paddling with his feet—his legs being long enough to reach the water on either side—he both propelled and steered the vessel in obedience to orders from Noah, for which service those inside fed him by handing up provisions through a chimney!

For all his reading, Rabelais is enthusiastic about the place of athletics in education, especially horsemanship, exercise with weapons and such gymnastics as may be useful in war. Also he suggests that young gentlemen should spend some time in observing the different sorts of handicraftsmen at work.

He must have known something of Copernican astronomy, for he makes Pantagruel tell us that some are "of opinion that the earth turns round about its Poles and not the Heavens, whatever we may think to the contrary; as when we are on the river Loire we think that the trees and the shore move, although this is only an effect of our boat's movement."

He must have loved to talk with sailors. He is said to have known Cartier, the Breton sea captain from St. Malo who had discovered Canada about the time that Rabelais himself was writing his great book, and he speaks of Canada by name. He realizes the boredom of a prolonged calm at sea as well as the terror of a storm. He understands how to heave-to in a gale, and in Book V of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* he describes in detail the maneuver of jibing the lateen mizzen of a square-rigger which we noted earlier in this book.

His imagination was fired by the great voyages. Neither Machiavelli, Erasmus, Luther or Calvin mention the sudden enlargement of the known world, but in the Third Book of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* when the latter is preparing for sea we read: "Through the retention of some aerial gusts the . . . mighty Galleons . . . are . . . set going at the pleasure and choice of their captains, pilots and steersmen. . . . Remote nations . . . are now arrived to us and we to them. Those voyages outreached flights of birds, and far surpassed the

scope of feathered fowles. . . . The Olympic gods . . . affrighted . . . said: ' . . . who knows but that . . . they may contrive a way for human kind to pierce into the high aerian clouds, get up into the spring-head of the hail, take an inspection of the snowy sources and shut and open as they please the sluices from whence proceed the floodgates of the rain?' " Thus in a jest human flight was anticipated by some three centuries and a half.

A man so receptive to new things must inevitably have urged forward the revolutionary torrent of his time. Amusingly enough, he whose tumbling run of words reminds us of luxuriant medieval sculpture constantly denounces the decayed medieval scheme. Although his style is as far as the poles from the neo-classic restraint that was to come, he considered himself a classicist! It was once said of Carlyle that his enthusiasm for Goethe was like some hairy barbarian kneeling before a Greek statue, and in Rabelais' vehement admiration of pagan antiquity there is something of the same paradox.

Classical or not, the new enthusiasm for ancient learning is there. In Book Two, while Pantagruel is studying in Paris, Gargantua writes to him: "But although my deceased father of happy memory, Grangousier, had bent his best endeavors to make me profit in all perfection and political knowledge, and that my labor and study was fully correspondent to, yea, went beyond his desire: nevertheless, as thou mayest well understand, the time then was not so proper and fit for learning as it is at present, neither had I plenty of good masters such as thou hast had; for that time was darksome, obscured with clouds of ignorance, and savoring a little of the infelicity and calamity of the Gothes who had, wherever they set foot, destroyed all good literature, which in my age hath by the divine goodness been restored unto its former light and dignity, and that with such amentment and increase of knowledge that now I should hardly be admitted unto the first grade of the little Grammar-school-boy's, I say, I who in my youthful days was (and that justly) reputed the most learned of the age; which I do not speak in vain boasting . . . but to give thee . . . encouragement to strive yet further."



He continues: "Now . . . the minds of men are qualified with all manner of discipline, and the old sciences revived. . . . Printing likewise is now in use, so elegant and so correct that better cannot be imagined, although it was found out only in my time by divine inspiration, as by a diabolical suggestion on the other hand was the invention of Ordnance"—that is of gunpowder.

"Good literature," a French translation of Erasmus' Latin "bonae literae," strikes the keynote of the entire passage. Also Rabelais' habit of sugar-coating serious thought with jests recalls Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*. Significantly, neither man went over into heresy.

The man from Chinon never tires of abusing "pardon-peddlers"—i.e. indulgence-sellers. In his *Pantagruelian Prognostication* he strikes at them no less than three times. On the other hand, he is careful not to deny the usefulness of indulgences altogether. In his Second Book he has: "So we went along, beginning at St. Gervase, and I go the pardons at the first box only, for in those matters very little contenteth me."

In the First Book Gargantua's father Grangousier—in old French "Great Throat"—put him under tutors of the old-fashioned sort. These Rabelais always calls Sophists in memory of the deceitful philosophers and word-merchants of ancient Athens whom Socrates was always exposing. Presently, however, seeing that the boy made little progress although he studied hard, Grangousier discharged the last of these old-fashioned tutors after paying the man his wages and making him "as drunk as an Englishman!" A humanist tutor was then found who took the young Prince up to Paris, which gives our author a chance to describe the inhabitants of the French capital, as follows: where "... the people . . . are so sottish, such boobies, so foolish and so fond by nature that a juggler, a carrier of indulgences, a pack-horse or mule with cymbals or tinkling bells, a blind fiddler in the middle of a cross-lane shall draw a greater confluence of people together than an evangelical preacher."

By a device which permits the author to dwell in detail upon his contempt for medieval education centered upon

formal logic and scholastic theology, Gargantua's humanist tutor begins by permitting his pupil to continue briefly in the bad old way. Rabelais does not attack the old-fashioned curriculum directly but identifies it with repetitive and lifeless forms of religion, with sloth and vice! The young Prince rose late, ate gluttonously, heard six and twenty or thirty Masses, mumbled at great length "a confused heap of Pater-nosters and Aves," and then studied "some paltry half hour with his eyes fixed upon his book . . . (while) . . . his mind was in the kitchen." After again eating and drinking gluttonously and afterwards "blockishly mumbling . . . a scurvy grace," he sent for cards, dice, checkers and chessmen and spent the afternoon at various games of which our author names more than two hundred, then slept soundly for several hours, again ate gluttonously and spent the evening in gaming and drinking heavily, or with harlots, with perhaps another late supper before going to bed.

Presently, however, his tutor began to bring him to better courses and introduced him to the New Learning. After rising at four, a chapter of Scripture was read to him while he was being rubbed down, after which he prayed in some manner suggested by that reading. After noting the weather and the positions of the sun and moon, he would then have no less than three hours of lectures, followed in fair weather by ball-playing with his attendants, tennis and other light exercises. His "tennis" must have been what is now called real tennis or court-tennis. They rested when they felt inclined, had themselves rubbed down to remove the sweat, changed their shirts and went to dinner.

After an unbelievably strenuous afternoon of horsemanship, exercise with weapons, gymnastics and other outdoor occupations the evening passed with more music and learned conversation, sometimes varied with visits to travelers returned from remote countries, and on clear nights with another look at the stars and planets. The imaginary routine ended with still another review by the tutor of the lessons of the day and with prayer before going to bed. The New Learning did not spare its votaries!

Nevertheless Gargantua's tutor did not entirely forget the

old French maxim which is the counterpart of our English

All work and no play  
Makes Jack a dull boy.

for once a month in fine weather they took a day off in the country. Even then, "although that day was . . . without books or lecture, yet it was not spent without profit, for in the meadows they usually repeated certain pleasant verses of Virgil's *Agriculture*, or of Hesiod and of Politian's *Husbandry*, and would remember some witty Latin epigrams in order to turn them immediately into . . . songs in the French language for dancing."

With the war which interrupts Gargantua's education by breaking out between his father Grangousier and a neighboring king, Picrochole, we are concerned chiefly because it introduces one of the book's chief characters, "Friar John of the Funnels . . . , young, gallant, frisk, lusty, nimble, quick, active, bold, adventurous, resolute, tall, lean, widemouthed, long-nosed, a fair despatcher of morning prayers, unbridler of Masses and a runner over of vigils; and to conclude summarily in a word, a right monk if there ever was any since the monking world monked a monastery, for the rest a clerk even to the teeth in matter of breviary." Seeing Picrochole's men wantonly destroying the vineyard of his Abbey and horrified at the prospect of no wine for years to come, the valiant friar seizes a great crucifix for a weapon, rushes out upon the villains, and massacres them after a fashion which permits Rabelais to display his anatomical knowledge by describing in detail the injuries which he did them. At this the other friars pluck up courage, come out and begin confessing the wounded, afterwards cutting the throats of the said wounded with little knives.

On learning of Picrochole's insufficiently provoked attack, Grangousier tries hard to make peace. At the same time he recognizes his feudal obligation to protect his subjects, saying "Reason will have it so, for by their labor I am supported, and with their sweat I am nourished, I, my children and my family." Accordingly, while sending an ambassador to Picrochole and offering bountiful reparation for any possible damage to the latter's subjects in the petty quarrel which had

been the pretext for the latter's attack, he prepares for war and writes to Gargantua to come home. In his letter the old giant charitably exaggerates the late-Roman theory of war which was intended to minimize loss to the professional armies of the Empire as follows: "The exploit shall be done with as little effusion of blood as may be; and if possible by means far more expedient, such as military policy, devices and stratagems of war, we shall save all the souls and send them home as merry as crickets unto their own houses."

Of course Gargantua wins the war, combing so many cannon-balls out of his hair that Grangousier takes them for "short-winged hawks of the College of Montaigu," i.e. lice. This gives the author a chance to repeat once more the familiar accusations made by the men of the New Learning against that austere and reactionary College. Gargantua's tutor vehemently denies that he had put his pupil there, "since galley slaves, condemned murderers and even Grangousier's dogs are better off than the students in that filthy and inhuman place."

At this point Friar John is sent for, and immediately makes himself popular by his jovial enthusiasm for eating and drinking and—alas—by indecorous conversation. The company is astonished at him, since all agree that monks are usually detested as the worst company in the world. When Grangousier protests that monks are not entirely useless since they pray for us, Gargantua—a man of a younger generation, let us note—optimistically retorts that all true Christians "are continually praying."

After some typical Sixteenth Century detraction of pilgrimages as useless gadding about, there is an admirable statement of the medieval feeling about the unity of Christendom and the consequent limitation of war which had made most of the many medieval armed scuffles among Christians socially unimportant. When releasing a prisoner in order that the latter may make the final effort for an accommodation with Picrochole, Grangousier says: "The time is not now as formerly, to conquer the kingdoms of our neighbor princes and to build up our greatness upon the loss of our nearest Christian brother. This imitation of the ancient Herculeses, Alexanders, Hannibals, Scipios, Caesars and



other such heroes is quite contrary to the profession of the Gospel of Christ by which we are commanded to preserve, keep, rule and govern every man in his own country . . . , and that which heretofore the Barbarians and Saracens called prowess and valor we do now call robbing, thievery and wickedness."

When Picrochole has been defeated, thanks in part to Friar John, Grangousier offers to make the latter Abbot of any one of three notable monasteries—Rabelais takes for granted that a king can give religious offices to whomsoever he likes. The Friar, however, will take no reward except leave to found an abbey on new principles of his own—the Abbey of Theleme.

This famous Abbey is a flight of pure fancy. Rabelais simply imagines what he might like to do in a dream world with infinite money at his command. Theleme has six "fair great libraries" one each for Greek, Latin, Hebrew, French, Italian and Spanish books. Aside from this provision for study, every real monastic idea is reversed. The Thelemites are to be of both sexes, the women pretty and amiable, and the men handsome. They have no fixed routine nor even a clock to mark the hour. All are free to depart whenever they like, to be married on leaving the place, and to be rich. Meanwhile they have splendid buildings, luxuriously furnished rooms, and facilities for every sport and pastime. Indeed the whole life of these "jolly friars and nuns . . . was spent not according to laws, statutes or rules but according to their own free will and pleasure."

At this point the Twentieth Century reader may think he smells a rat, and a malodorous one at that. This, such a reader might say, is merely the twaddle of Rousseau and the radical democrats who have imagined man to be naturally good, absurdly maintaining that the evil in his nature is not really his but is only plastered on to him, as it were, by bad laws and social conventions. Accordingly man is virtuous, so they claim, exactly insofar as he is undisciplined.

Rabelais is no such fool. He continues: "Men that are free, well born, well bred and conversant in honest companies, have naturally an instinct and spur that prompteth them unto virtuous actions, and withdraws them from vice, which is called honor." His imaginary Thelemites were supposed to

be gentlemen and gentlewomen accustomed from childhood to the strict discipline of the aristocratic medieval family. From boyhood the men had been trained in military exercises and accustomed to the idea that they must risk wounds and death in battle. Moreover in his ideal Abbey they were so thoroughly taught that everyone "could read, write, sing upon several musical instruments, speak five or six . . . languages and compose in them all very quaintly both in verse and prose." How many people today have been disciplined enough to do that?

Next Gargantua's son Pantagruel, after trying other universities, goes to Paris where he finds a great library of which the catalogue gives opportunity for making irreverent fun of the intellectual interests of the dying Middle Ages. One book is entitled *The very subtle question whether the Chimaera bombinating in the void can entirely consume second intentions, which was debated for ten weeks in the Council of Constance*. Another is the *Barbouillamenta Scoti* which seems to mean "The Smutchings of Scotus," the so-called Subtle Doctor. A third is *The Whinnyings—or Neighings—of Cajetan*, the Thomist Cardinal who interviewed Luther. Still another is *The Power of the Church to Depose a Pope* by Gerson, a great late-medieval French theologian. Pantagruel presently gives his opinion of "the sottish Sophisters of this town of Paris and other places . . . who in their disputes do not search for the truth but only for contradiction and debate." By contrast Rabelais' young Prince makes "A Catholic confession and service of God's Word" as follows: "O Lord God—I vow unto Thee that in all countries whatsoever, wherein I shall have any power or authority . . . I will cause thy holy Gospel to be purely, simply and entirely preached so that the abuses of a rabble of hypocrites and false prophets who by human constitutions and depraved inventions have poisoned all the world, shall be quite exterminated from about me."

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The seeming contradictions between Rabelais' mocking coarseness and a sincere Catholic belief can be resolved if we think of him as a medieval man, spiritually of a time when

what seem to us shocking irreverence was by no means necessarily unbelief. Since churches were often the only public buildings where people of all classes could come and go freely, easy-going behaviour obtained in them. For instance, from Rabelais' story of an uncleanly practical joke played by Panurge upon a lady who refused his advances we learn that dogs were allowed to run about freely in the Cathedral of Our Lady of Paris even during services. Somewhat similar stories are told about "Powles Walk" in old St. Paul's, London. The men of the Middle Ages were incorrigibly certain that all churches belonged to them more than to the clergy, and therefore that, from time to time, they might play the fool there.

Two examples of the free-and-easy customs which, in one form or another, were widespread, may be enough. In 1445, less than forty years before Rabelais' birth according to some accounts, Charles VII of France, Joan of Arc's King, wrote as follows: "We, Charles by the Grace of God, etc. It has been brought to our notice by our beloved and loyal counsellor the Lord Bishop of Troyes, in a complaint made by him that notwithstanding the decree (of the Council of Bâle, 1436) by which servants and ministers of Holy Church are expressly debarred from celebrating certain derisive and scandalous ceremonies which they call the Feast of Fools, which it has been the custom to hold in several cathedrals and collegiate churches during the Feast of Christmas, in which ceremonies the aforesaid servants of Holy Church have been accustomed to commit irreverence and disloyalty towards Almighty God our Creator and His divine and holy service, to the great shame and scandal of the whole ecclesiastical state, making the churches like public places and performing even during the celebration of Holy Mass diverse and derisive mockeries and spectacles, disguising their bodies and wearing habits indecent and not pertaining to their state and profession, as the habits of fools, of men-at-arms, and of women, with the wearing of masks, etc., all of which abuses, and others customary at this season, have been forbidden on pain of penalties, nevertheless in this present year at the said feast of Holy Innocents and the Circumcision these ceremonies have been carried out at Troyes with such excess of mockery, disguisings, farces, rhyming and other follies as has not been known

within the memory of man. . . . Since certain persons are determined to carry out and continue the celebration of the said feast, declaring in their foolish obstinacy and presumption that whatever Our Counsellors may decide . . . they will still continue, Our said Counsellor the Bishop of Troyes humbly prays Us to grant him by Our offices aid and support, as he may have need."

Again, more than a century after the man from Chinon was dead, Du Cange the historian of French liturgies reported the following old custom which had been observed for at least half a thousand years in the Diocese of Beauvais: "In order that Our Lady might be represented fleeing into Egypt with the child Jesus, there was chosen a most beautiful maiden who, bearing in her arms an image of the Child, was placed upon an ass adorned gloriously for the occasion; and with great pomp she was led from the Cathedral to the parish Church of St. Stephen accompanied by clergy and people; and when this joyous procession arrived at St. Stephen's the maiden was led into the sanctuary and stationed, seated on an ass, at the Gospel side of the High Altar. And then was begun a solemn Mass, of which the Introit, Kyrie, Gloria and Credo each ended with a melodious Hee-Haw; and what is more strange, there is a manuscript rubric for this festival which says: At the end of the Mass the Priest, turning himself to the people, instead of intoning 'Ite, missa est,' shall hee-haw thrice; and the people, instead of replying 'Deo gratias,' shall respond thrice, 'Hee-haw—hee-haw—hee-haw. . . .' Many times and oft did the Bishop attempt to abolish this festival with canonical censures, but in vain, for it was too deeply rooted in tradition; nevertheless at last the authority of Parliament succeeded in suppressing it."

The traditional "Lord of Misrule" in innumerable Christmas pageants is a sort of little brother of those who so riotously celebrated the Feast of Fools, or shouted "Hee-Haw" in church in Beauvais. Just so the spirit of Rabelais harked back to an earlier time when men had no fear that the unity of the West was in danger.

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The good fortune of the English-speaking peoples sent Rabelais one of the world's great translators, Sir Thomas



Urquhart, a Seventeenth Century Scotch laird, learned, courageous and loyal, but fantastically eccentric and without worldly wisdom. Hating and despising the sour, Calvinistic Puritans who rose against the king to whom he was faithful, he fought on the unsuccessful Royalist side, and was taken prisoner. This misfortune gave him the opportunity to produce his masterpiece. In prison and therefore unable to continue his war against the Puritans with the sword, he seems to have determined to do so with his pen and therefore begun translating *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. His version has the luxuriantly decorated, Gothic life of the original, reproducing the rush and sparkle of the Frenchman's learned torrent of words. Indeed in piling up adjectives and epithets Urquhart achieves the amazing feat of outdoing Rabelais himself. Where in one passage the Frenchman has a hundred and fifty-four happy and a hundred and fifty-three unhappy terms for a certain part of the masculine anatomy, the translation has two hundred and seventy-seven and four hundred and thirty-seven respectively, a record which will probably never be broken.

Sir Thomas has been accused of occasional inaccuracies. For instance his title for the famous monk, Friar John "of the Funnels" is taken from the French "des Entommeures" which has been said to mean not "funnels" but "cuttings" or "carvings"—renderings more appropriate to the Herculean defense of the vines with which the gallant cleric enters the story. Nevertheless one hopes that his translation, in the famous phrase of Thucydides, will remain "a possession forever."

The Puritans released him on parole, probably thinking him no very formidable enemy. Perhaps in exile on the Continent, he heard of Charles II's Restoration and laughed so hard that he had a fit and so died for joy.

## XI. Devil-Worshipping Genius

IN 1536 while Henry VIII was suppressing the smaller English monasteries and the first dated edition of *Gargantua* was a year old, a young Frenchman of twenty-six named Jean Cauvin, in English John Calvin, published a book called *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. He was a scholarly and logical genius who had constructed the only consistent Protestant theology, but he was also a Devil-Worshipper, for he represented our heavenly Father as a sadist and a maniac who had created mankind and had bound them by predestination in order to condemn most of them to eternal torment for his own pleasure.

By coincidence, Calvin's horrible masterpiece was published in the city of Bâle where at the moment Erasmus, who twenty years before had "laid the egg" which Luther hatched, was dying.

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Calvin came of a comfortable middle-class family in Noyon in the Oise valley where the cathedral, built in the traditional Twelfth Century style which mingled the pointed arch with the round, towers above the little town. The place was dominated by its bishopric which had become almost a private possession of a locally powerful family.

He developed into a serious boy with a taste for study, and at fourteen he went up to the University of Paris. If the religious preoccupation of his later years was already upon him, it was as yet unseen. What appeared upon the surface was an enthusiasm for the classical studies of the "New Learning." At the College of La Marche he worked under a kindly teacher with whom he formed a permanent friendship which was one of the few warm spots in his life. From La Marche he went on to the College of Montaigu, famous as we have already noted, for its scholasticism and its discomforts.

He left the Montaigu just as the future St. Ignatius Loyola entered it. Probably they did not sit in the same classrooms, but they may have passed each other in the cheerless corridors.

Meanwhile his father was accused of embezzling certain trust funds, after five years was condemned, and finally died excommunicate. At this the future reformer was furious at what he considered injustice. Perhaps he had already come to dislike what he felt to be formalized and commercialized religion, and the treatment of his father pushed him over into opposition to the official Church. Nevertheless in 1532 when that father had been dead a year and he himself was twenty-three his first published work was wholly humanistic. It was a commentary on the pagan Roman philosopher Seneca's treatise on clemency and it quoted seventy-six Latin and Greek pagan authors as against citing Church Fathers only seven times and the Bible only three times.

Already, however, he must have been preparing to attack established doctrine, for in the following year he is believed to have composed or helped to compose an address by the Rector of the University of Paris which gave scandal. That address was on Christian philosophy, and ended with a "Hail Mary." Moreover it seems to have advanced no definitely heretical teaching, but it began by reproducing Erasmus' preface to the third edition of his New Testament, and most of it was translated from a sermon of Luther's on salvation as a free gift from God and in no way due to man's good works. This last was so touchy a point that both the Rector and Calvin may have had to escape from Paris, the younger man—so it is said—leaving his quarters by means of a rope of bed-clothes hung from his window. If so, it was his sole recorded athletic feat. Certainly he left the capital.

During this absence he made an honest decision. On his approaching twenty-fifth birthday he would reach the canonical age for being ordained priest. Refusing to sail under false colors, he resigned certain benefices which he already had, thus giving up their income.

Already he was working at the text of his *Institutes*—a massive weapon with which to strike the Church whose local authorities at Noyon had condemned his father.

He seems to have begun to shape his great book in the summer of 1534. Henry VIII's Parliament had just passed the Act of Supremacy which abolished the remnants of papal power in England. In Paris Loyola, with only six companions and as yet unnoticed by the world, was very quietly founding his "Company" or "Society of Jesus" which was to play so great a part in the coming papal counter-attack.

Before the end of the year Calvin was again in Paris when certain religious innovators anonymously tacked up a number of posters which violently insulted what they called "the horrible abuses of the Mass." One was fastened to the very door of the royal palace. The authorities of course reacted by arresting a number of known or suspected culprits, some of whom were burned—apparently to the satisfaction of most Parisians. Again Calvin hurriedly left the capital, this time never to return.

Once in safety across the French border, he soon struck back with his *Institutes*, the various editions of which may be considered as one, since those who have compared the different versions agree that the additions merely round out and clarify his first text.

Calvin, like Luther, was out to destroy the traditional Christian idea of priesthood, or—as they put it—the corrupt idea of priesthood which had perverted the holy simplicity of the Gospel. Both held that the Bible, the collection of ancient Jewish and early Christian writings warranted by the Catholic Church as divinely inspired, is the only basis for faith and must be literally interpreted from cover to cover. They were as willing to quote the Old Testament as the New—thus, one would think, minimizing Our Lord's unique authority. From Scripture, according to them, we learn of a God who by His sovereign will arbitrarily saves a minority of His human creatures for a life of perfect and eternal happiness with Him, while condemning the majority to an eternity of physical torment. This monstrous condemnation is just and righteous because human nature is so totally depraved and wicked that we can do nothing good in God's sight. No one can even cooperate with God's Grace in working out their own salvation which the Creator freely gives to His chosen few by



convincing them that they will certainly be saved. Consequently priesthood in the sense of a separate order charged with special powers of conveying Grace through the Sacraments is meaningless, and the blasphemous pretense of such a thing should be abolished.

Also we find in the great Devil-Worshipper the same astounding self-confidence as in the Miner's Son. In his Preface to the 1541 French edition of the *Institutes* we read: "Since all truth and wholesome doctrine come from God, I will dare to confess (in French 'reconnaître') this work to be God's more than mine." He wrote to the Senate of Geneva: "Since my conscience assures me that what I have taught and written is from God, I must maintain it or I would be traitor to the truth." In interpreting Scripture he sets himself up against the Apostles themselves. In the Second and Third Chapters of the Third Book of the *Institutes* he says that St. Peter, in the fifth verse of the First Chapter of his First Epistle, errs "by attributing to faith what more properly belongs to hope," and that St. Paul in the fifth verse of the Fifth Chapter of his Epistle to the Galatians is "not in strict propriety of speech." In interpreting Our Lord's and St. John the Baptist's preaching "repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," he insists that all the Apostles, including St. Paul, err because they "cling superstitiously to the juxta-position of the syllables, and attend not to the coherence of meaning in the words!" At this one hardly knows whether to laugh or cry. What he means is that the Apostles always put repentance first and entrance into the kingdom second, whereas he—hoping to save his favorite doctrine of predestination, as we shall see in a moment—prefers to reverse the order. Where, after all, did this Sixteenth Century fellow find the self-confidence to correct those who had best known Jesus Himself? And what is the boundary between such self-confidence and an appalling spiritual pride?

After this it seems a small matter that he repeats Luther's error as to the nature of sins, confusing involuntary impulses to do wrong with really sinful acts to which the will consents.

On the other hand he was far from being a mere follower of the Miner's Son and of the other early religious innovators.

He was like an architect who finds building materials made ready for him by predecessors who have made rough sketches of a proposed building but have left no detailed drawings. He made a coherent plan stamped with his own personality, giving the religious revolt a complete and consistent scheme of theology and Church government—an astonishing achievement. The title page of his great book calls it “a summary of almost all doctrine necessary to salvation.” In other words it was a “Summa” like those of the great medieval thinkers of which the *Summa* of St. Thomas Aquinas is the most famous. The early Fathers of the Church had written to set forth specifically Christian truths, and an admiring biographer of Luther has said that all of his writings were separate contributions to the study of this or that immediate matter in hand. By contrast, the great intellectual achievement of the Middle Ages had been that their foremost philosophers and theologians had labored to sum up all necessary principles of faith and morals in single treatises. Thus the intellectual strain of maintaining beliefs which transcend the human reason is lessened by subdividing that strain, in other words by making the explanation of each particular difficulty fit in with one’s explanation of other more or less closely related difficulties.

In his *Mont St. Michel and Chartres* Henry Adams likens the process to the subdivision of strains in the great cathedrals which were the masterpieces of Gothic architecture. The weight and therefore the outward thrust of the high stone vaulting is concentrated upon the vaulting-ribs. At the points where each cluster of ribs comes together, the thrust is met by the counterthrust of the high exterior arches known as flying buttresses which form a sort of scaffolding of stone around the clerestory, the higher part of the great church. These flying buttresses gain additional strength from the weight of pinnacles which press down upon them near the outer springing or haunch of the arch of each. Through the solid lower part of the buttresses, the strain of the vaulting is carried down to the foundations on which the structure stands—I say “stands” although it seems to spring upward and soar in the air by some magic of its own.

Part of the secret of this astonishing effect is that each structural member is balanced by others, so that the whole

stands firm. Similarly, the gigantic force of Calvin's book is its comprehensiveness. Once you admit his premises, everything follows naturally. Each intellectual strain is divided and subdivided. Paradoxically enough, this enemy of the Faith which had been the soul of the Middle Ages, was also the last of the great medieval system-builders, the makers of "Summas." Indeed in one sense his *Institutes* is a greater intellectual *tour de force* than any of theirs, for they were working within the framework of an established system, while he had no guide except the unsystematic reformers who had immediately preceded him.

As Rabelais had continued the liveliness of Gothic sculpture, so Calvin recaptured the logical consistency of the Gothic architects and of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Happily for the West his logic was not accompanied by the overflowing vitality which makes the pages of Rabelais and the Gothic sculpture of the Thirteenth Century Cathedrals so vivid. Instead this amazingly un-French Frenchman consistently preached doom and gloom. Whereas most of his countrymen throughout their long history have preserved a robust indifference to the problem of evil, he—"that appalling exception who had nothing of France in him except lucidity" as Belloc somewhere calls him—was a fanatic who consistently hated human happiness. D. B. Wyndham Lewis has aptly labeled him "the Mirth Controller." To find his like among Frenchmen for rigid principles and indifference to humanity one may remember Robespierre and the men of the French Revolution whose massacres have been eclipsed only by those of the Communists of our own day.

The *Institutes* are divided into Four Books, the First dealing with our knowledge of God the Creator and of Scripture; the Second with the fall of man and with Christ who is God the Redeemer; the Third with predestination, faith and justification, i.e. with the way which Divine Grace is, according to him, to be obtained. The Fourth gives his version of the Holy Catholic Church, her authority, sacraments and relation to civil government.

His recurring themes are predestination and God's anger. Luther too had taught predestination to salvation or damnation and had denied that man can cooperate with the saving

grace of God, but had held that in matters other than eternal salvation we can achieve civic virtue and can go in and out "and milk the cow or not as we choose." Calvin stretched predestination into determinism, the belief that God has ordained everything that has happened or will happen up to the Day of Judgment.

Now doom undeniably plays a part in human affairs. Barrett Wendell writes in the chapter on Aeschylus in his *Traditions of European Literature*: "Human beings come into this world amid environments utterly beyond their control; no man can choose his parentage, or his country, or his century, or his station. . . . And in the depths of the future only one fact looms certain: human life must swiftly end . . . in death. . . . Fate you may call these surroundings of us all, or whatever else you will. Nothing can avert them, or even obscure them." This, however, is very different from saying that we have no power of choosing between alternatives.

If that is so, then the word "sin" has no real meaning. In lighter vein, we may remember the English limerick:

There was a young man who said "damn!"  
 Alas it appears that I am  
 A creature that moves  
 In predestinate grooves.  
 I'm not even a bus, I'm a tram!

—meaning a tramway which Americans would call a trolley-car. Or more seriously with Fitzgerald's Omar:

Oh thou who didst with pitfall and with gin  
 Beset the path I was to wander in,  
 Thou wilt not with predestination round  
 Enmesh me and impute my fall to sin.

There is also a story about an old woman who is reported to have said that, as far as she could see, Calvin meant that "We'll be damned if we do and we'll be damned if we don't."

Calvin, however, will admit no exceptions. For him even the smallest act has been decreed from all eternity by an angry God who hates most of his helpless creatures.

This makes God the author of evil whereas the Church had always taught that He, who is righteousness itself, permits



evil for reasons which we can understand only faintly and doubtfully if at all. According to Calvin, however, the Almighty can do anything except limit His own omnipotence, and consequently cannot permit anything, but must be Himself the origin of evil. Everything that has happened or will happen, no matter how trivial, has been determined from all eternity by unalterable decree. Moreover for him it is precisely God's perfect righteousness, as contrasted with the unavoidable wickedness of all the helpless puppets whom he has made, which causes him to hate most of those puppets and to condemn them to an eternity of torment.

But if God were really the author of evil, hating most of His creatures and indeed creating most of them in order to damn them, how would He differ from the Devil? If human, such a being would be a sadistic madman.

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Nevertheless in Book I Calvin writes: "The pious mind believes it equally necessary to God's glory to punish the impious and abandoned as to reward the righteous with eternal life." What a contrast with the beautiful form of Absolution in the Anglican Morning Prayer: "Almighty God . . . who desireth not the death of a sinner but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live!" The Devil-Worshipper claims that all men have an instinctive knowledge of God's existence, but he insists strongly on the limitations of our rational knowledge. In the Second Book he tries to prove our reason defective by the astounding argument that by itself it does not touch "the true observance of the Sabbath!" Consequently we need to be guided by Revelation which we find in the Scriptures. At the same time, however, "God, *in order to involve all mankind in the same guilt* [*italics mine*], sets before them all without exception an exhibition of His Majesty in His works." In another place he ferociously writes of those who do not know the Scriptures: "*Their conscience . . . is sufficient for their just condemnation.*" The object of the law of nature therefore is *that man may be rendered inexcusable.*"

He admits that "The human mind, hearing this doctrine, . . . boils and rages as if aroused by the sound of a trumpet."

He even admits that this boiling and raging seems not wholly unjustified, since "It seems absurd that man should be blinded by the will and command of God, and yet be forthwith punished for his blindness." Nevertheless he falls back on his own logic: God is a judge, and "...it would be ridiculous for a judge merely to permit without decreeing what should be done and without commanding his officers to execute it." For him "Christ is the only pledge of love," since he will at least save a few by faith in the sense of confidence. But except for Christ "all things... speak of hatred and wrath."

After this it logically followed that all unbelievers, no matter how virtuous, must be condemned to eternal torment. In this Calvin exaggerated the medieval belief that "outside of the Church there is no salvation." Catholics like Dante had frankly asked how God could justly bar from heaven a virtuous Hindu who had never even heard of Our Lord. In the Nineteenth Canto of his *Paradiso* the poet had answered the question in the fashion characteristic of his time which knew little or nothing of the wiser and more kindly answer that people may belong to the soul of the Church although not to her body. He had starkly affirmed

A questo regno  
Non sali mai chi non credette in Cristo,

"No one ever rose to that kingdom (i.e. heaven) who did not believe in Christ." The learned Florentine had supported that affirmation by the only possible defense, that of mystery. God who is the source of all justice cannot be unjust. Our minds, at least in this life, cannot fathom the reasons for His acts any more than the unaided eye can see bottom at mid-ocean.

At the same time, however, Dante had assembled around his harsh belief every mitigating circumstance consistent with it. He had begun by admitting that the idea of damning virtuous heathen had long and ceaselessly troubled him. Also he by no means makes God's justice wholly unintelligible to us. On the contrary our minds can see the reasons for not a few of His acts, as our eyes can see the ocean floor in shoal water. Finally, in the next world many who have called upon

Our Lord's name will be further from Him than those who have not known Him. In the Fourth Canto of his *Inferno* we find the virtuous unbelievers not in Hell in our sense but in Limbo, a sort of ante-chamber to Hell in which they suffer no physical pain. They are "honorable people" who live in a "noble castle" which encloses a "fair green meadow." As Dante's guide Virgil, who is one of them, says in a famous line:

e sol di tanto offesi,  
Che senza speme vivemo in disio

"We are afflicted only in that without hope we live in desire"—i.e. for the beautiful vision of God which they now know of but realize that they can never see.

The man from Noyon meets the moral argument, i.e. that predestined damnation to torment is fiendish injustice, by overstraining the counter-argument from mystery. Just as he had twisted original sin into total depravity, so he twists Dante's Catholic proposition that God's actions are partly incomprehensible into the proposition that those actions are totally incomprehensible. Consequently "... individuals . . . , doomed from the womb to certain death, . . . are to glorify Him (i.e. God) by their destruction."

Comment would be superfluous. One can only hope that the words just quoted were not written in a mood of secret and savage humor.

On one point Calvin's iron logic has sometimes been thought to have faltered. While reading the *Institutes* one sometimes wonders whether he thought that Adam—before the Fall and when man's will was in accord with God's will—was free to choose between good and evil. In fact this matter afterward provoked long debates between two different schools of Calvinistic theologians. Most readers of our own day, however, have concluded that if the strange young Frenchman had definitely answered the question he would have said: even before the Fall the first human beings were already under the Divine Curse, and must have fallen as they did.

We may note in passing that Calvin always speaks of the Fall as "Adam's Fall." To him Eve was only an appendage.

On the other hand the "Institutes" have not a single phrase of hostility to Our Lady, whom he calls the Blessed Virgin, whereas many of the early religious innovators who were soon to be called Protestants disgraced themselves by insulting the Mother of God.

The great Devil-Worshipper differed from the Miner's Son as to how we know the truth of the Bible even more than as to predestination. Luther had said that the Church has power to discern true Scripture from false, and this logically gave the Church also the power to perceive the true meaning of Scripture, as Henry VIII had seen in his *Defense of the Seven Sacraments*. To avoid this Catholic conclusion, the man from Noyon held that we can be certain of the authority of Scripture by the direct action of the Holy Spirit upon our minds. That the Church in her corporate capacity shall have anything to say on the matter he calls an "insulting," "raving" and "pernicious" error. He does not mention the argument that Our Lord's promise to be with His followers always even to the end of the world must apply to a corporate body, and cannot apply to individual believers if these are free to contradict each other on fundamental points. For Calvin the Church is wholly man-made. He mentions St. Augustine's famous saying "Neither would I myself believe the Gospel did not the authority of the Universal Church compel me," but glides away from it by saying that only unbelievers find the Church more impressive than the written text.

Like the Wittenberger, after making the Scriptures the sole test of faith, he had to deal with St. James' identification of religion with good works, but he was far too intelligent merely to abuse St. James' Epistle as Luther had done. Instead he tries to maintain that St. James really meant that faith which does not subsequently produce good works is dead, in other words it is not real faith. He saw, as Luther did not, that it was impossible to set up the canonical Scriptures as the sole test of belief and then repudiate an entire book of the New Testament.

The ethics which, according to the young Frenchman, the Bible had impressed upon him by the direct action of the Holy Spirit (!) exaggerated original sin into total depravity,



a favorite idea of his to which he returns again and again both in the latter part of Book I and again in Book II of the *Institutes*. The Catholic Church had always taught the fall of man and original sin. This had nothing to do with the literal truth or untruth of the opening chapters of Genesis, which not only Erasmus but great early theologians like Origen and St. Augustine had believed to be an allegory. The essence of the traditional teaching had always been that somewhere and somehow man's will, until then in accord with the will of God, had turned against God. Consequently all of us have within us an element of evil which causes us to sin and therefore to risk the loss of the soul, i.e. the loss of perfect and eternal happiness with God in Heaven. Otherwise there would have been no need for Our Lord's redeeming work.

Indeed the universal fact of sin is obvious to anyone who honestly examines their conscience. "Original sin, a fact as plain as potatoes" Chesterton says somewhere. The pagan poet Ovid told the truth about all mankind when he wrote: "I approve the better and follow the worse."

On the other hand, the Church had always insisted that the divine image in man, although disfigured by sin, is not obliterated. Fallen man needs God's Grace in order to be saved, but Grace is freely offered to all, and man's free will can, if he chooses, cooperate with Grace.

Accordingly Calvin, in order to establish universal doom, had to give the traditional teaching a twist. Quoting two isolated texts—the twenty-first verse of the Eighth Chapter of Genesis which makes God say in part "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," and the fifth verse of the Third Chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians in which St. Paul says "not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves," he concluded that by our own strength we cannot even entertain a good thought—which conflicts with many other texts.

At the climax of his argument he writes: "Let us hold this then as an undoubted truth which no opposition can ever shake—that the mind of man is so completely alien from the righteousness of God that it conceives, desires and undertakes everything that is impious, perverse, base, impure and flagitious; that man's heart is so thoroughly infected with the

poison of sin that it cannot produce anything but what is corrupt; and that if at any time men do anything apparently good, yet the mind always remains involved in hypocrisy and fallacious obliquity, and the heart enslaved by its inward perverseness."

Moreover, unlike Luther, he fully accepted the ethical implications of believing our nature to be wholly wicked. However he might hedge in words by recommending a moderate use of the God-given pleasures of this life, in spirit he went logically forward from his idea of total depravity to the horrible Puritan and Manichean conclusion that natural human pleasures are sinful not only in excess but in themselves. All the desires of the flesh, both voluntary and involuntary, so he writes, are sins.

By contrast, the Wittenberger's heart was closer to tradition than his head. He suspected that sacramental penance might convey Divine Grace as both the Eastern and the Western Church had insisted for so many centuries. He did not accept the ethical implication of the idea of total depravity, i.e. that gaiety and the pleasures of this life should be frowned upon.

Where the atmosphere of the Devil-Worshipper's ethics is still strong, one will often hear the word "gay" used as a term of reproach, as if it meant that the person in question was guilty of vicious or at least slightly scandalous conduct. For a Catholic antidote to this we may recall how the Irish poet Yeats makes the fiddler of Dooney anticipate life after death:

For the good are always the merry  
Save by an evil chance,  
And the merry love the fiddle,  
And the merry love to dance.  
So when the folk there see me  
They will all come up to me  
With "Here is the fiddler of Dooney"  
And dance like a wave of the sea!

Calvin's idea of total depravity which made him hate simple pleasures also made him reject religious art. He wrote of pictures and statues in churches: "But what they (i.e. the

Papists) call the pictures of statues of their Saints—what are they but examples of the most abandoned luxury and obscenity? . . . Even prostitutes in brothels are to be seen in more chaste and modest attire than those images in their temples which they wish to be accounted images of virgins.” And again, “I say nothing here of the impropriety and indecency conspicuous in most of them (i.e. in holy images), and the wanton licentiousness displayed in them by the painters and statuaries,” but even if faultless they would be useless for instruction.

There are several significant points about this passage. First there is the cold fury with which he attacks his opponents. In some places his shrill abuse rises to an obscene shriek—for instance in Chapter XVIII of Book IV of the *Institutes* we read: “This abomination of the Mass is the Helen with whom the enemies of the truth commit spiritual whoredom!” Next, one is tempted to ask why we must worship God only with our minds? Can we not also approach Him through our sense of beauty?

At the same time, however one may resent his hatred of images, one must remember the late-medieval abuse of them. We saw in Chapter II that a man as highly placed as Louis XI of France, a king who was also a great statesman, would try to “play off” one statue of Our Lady against another, threatening Our Lady of Loreto, for instance, that if she did not favor his designs he would transfer his devotion to a different image. That such base superstition existed at all may help to explain though not to excuse violent words.

Calvin’s idea of the visible Church, i.e. the Church on earth, is paradoxical. On the other hand he insists that “. . . outside of the Church no forgiveness of sins, no salvation can be hoped for,” fortifying himself by—somewhat irrelevantly—quoting Isaiah, Joel and Ezekiel. He speaks of “the sacred bond of unity” and the “detestable” makers of schisms. Also “the keys”—i.e. of Heaven—“have been given to the Church, when presbyters and bishops, to whom the office has been committed, confirm pious consciences in the hope of pardon.” As distinguished from the “invisible Church composed of those whose souls God has chosen to save, the visible Church here on earth is truly present wherever God’s word

is sincerely preached and the Sacraments administered according to Christ's institution. Strangely enough, however, according to him this enormously important visible Church is altogether man-made, in contrast with the divinely inspired Bible. Moreover, through Satan "for several ages the pure preaching of the Word disappeared," and "... there is no Church where lying and falsehood have ... supremacy ... (as they have) ... under the Papacy." The papal communion indeed retains "some vestiges of a Church," for instance baptism, but its "whole body, as well as all its individual congregations, lacks the form of a legitimate Church."

With his vast learning and amazing memory he had no difficulty in showing that both doctrine and Church discipline had developed with time, for instance that the powers of bishops and of the Popes had increased, and that certain Early Fathers whose names are honored held divergent opinions on a number of important points.

Like Luther he is opposed to four of the five observances which have often been called the lesser sacraments, Confirmation, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders and Marriage, but where the Miner's Son had thought that Penance might be a sacrament, he vehemently denies this and at the same time holds that "in true and legitimate ordination ... the laying on of hands" is sacramental. In connection with Penance, which following Erasmus and Luther he calls Penitence or Repentance, he is particularly angry with St. Jerome for saying that it is a "second plank of salvation" on which those who sin after baptism may be saved. This, he says, "is plainly impious" since it derogates from baptism. As to the forgiveness of sins, although he calls compulsory confession priestly tyranny "introduced when the world was sunk in shameful barbarism," nevertheless he goes much further in recommending private confession and absolution than most of his nominal followers would today. Oddly enough, however, when discussing the three Gospel texts which repeat Our Lord's grant of power to His Church to forgive or not to forgive wrongdoing, the nineteenth verse of the Sixteenth Chapter and the eighteenth verse of the Eighteenth Chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel and the twenty-third verse of the Twentieth Chapter of St. John's Gospel, he pointedly omits



to say that the divine commission includes the power not to forgive. One wonders whether he was unwilling to admit that the double power implies a degree of knowledge of the sin which can seldom if ever be had without private confession before absolution.

In general his historical method is one from which the scholarship of the Western World is only beginning to recover, i.e. from an exaggerated distrust of tradition and an intense effort to interpret ancient documents in an anti-traditional sense. No matter if the document can at least as well be understood traditionally, and no matter how strongly the tradition may be supported by common sense, according to him that tradition must be valueless.

We of the Twentieth Century may be pardoned for rejecting that method with irritation. We have seen it slop over from religious history into other historical fields—for instance in the third chapter of this book we noted the attempts of injudicious scholars to show that Columbus was almost anything except a Genoese as his contemporaries believed him to be. In our time the contempt for tradition has risen to absurdity in the ponderous follies of the ill-named "Higher Critics."

Consequently we who are sick and tired of doubtful interpretations of isolated texts may fail to realize how new and exciting it was four hundred years ago to have tradition pelted by a prolonged hailstorm of quotations. The latest English translation of the *Institutes* lists no less than two thousand, seven hundred and eighty-five quotations from the canonical Scriptures alone, not counting nine from the Apocrypha and an almost equally imposing mass of six hundred and ninety-five quotations from fifty-nine Fathers and other non-biblical writers. The intellectual industry and logic with which the great Devil-Worshipper marshalled his vast learning is perhaps even more astounding than the learning itself.

In any corporate undertaking it is essential to have a manual which purports to "know all the answers." The religious rebels now had such a book.

Moreover the early Calvinists, far from feeling trapped and hopeless victims of doom, saw themselves as members of an

iron race, chosen of God and destined to trample upon His enemies who were also theirs.

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Besides the *Institutes*, two others of Calvin's many writings deserve a word: his controversy with Cardinal Sadoletto and his defense of usury.

Sadoletto was an Italian churchman and humanist who in youth had been in love with beautiful Latin like so many men of that sort. Pope Leo X had made him one of his own Latin secretaries and absentee Bishop of Carpentras in the Lower Rhône valley. In later life, however, Sadoletto had come to take religion seriously, had retired to his diocese and was trying to win back religious rebels by sweet reasonableness and by improving the morals of the clergy. In 1540 he wrote to invite the Genevans to return to the Roman Catholic Communion. Calvin, although at that time he had exiled himself to Strasbourg, was asked to reply and stoutly contended for his new Church as the true representative of that founded by Our Lord. He called his answer an *Admonition*, and for a moment he harked back to his own humanist youth. In the same style which he had used in his youthful Commentary on Seneca's *Clemency* he says that he is sorry to argue against "one who in his time had done so much for good literature."

On Calvin's lips that phrase shows how rapidly the religious revolution had moved. Within less than a generation since Erasmus published his New Testament, to speak of the New Learning in terms of "good literature" already begins to sound like an echo from a distant past.

On the other hand, the late-medieval abuses which had been deplored for centuries were still live issues. Swiftly changing its tone, his *Admonition* purports to be a partial catalogue of alleged relics, many of which must be false because they duplicate each other. His list is long and certainly sounds impressive. However, in at least one capital instance the man from Noyon was wholly mistaken. He said that the alleged pieces of the "True Cross" would fill a ship. but a distinguished Nineteenth Century French architect and archeologist, Charles Rohault de Fleury, took the immense

trouble of measuring all the existing relics of the cross found in Jerusalem in the Fourth Century by St. Helena and ever since venerated as the True Cross. He found that their combined measurements totalled only 4,000,000 cubic millimeters—about one-fifth of a cubic foot—while a cross big and strong enough to crucify a man on would probably have about 178,000,000 cubic millimeters—about six cubic feet—of wood.

On the other hand since accepted relics would make the financial fortune of any shrine, the temptation to forge them was great. We saw in the second chapter that as early as the Fourteenth Century Chaucer complained bitterly of the trade in false relics.

Still another notable action of the great Devil-Worshipper's was that he was the first of all the theologians who have called themselves Christian to defend usury.

Here again, as in regard to the unity of the Church and private confession, his break with tradition was less abrupt than that of his followers. In the words of Tawney, his references to usury never indicate "excessive tolerance for the . . . financier. That interest is lawful, provided that it does not exceed an official maximum, that . . . loans must be made *gratis* to the poor, that the borrower must reap as much advantage as the lender, that excessive security must not be exacted, that what is venial as an occasional expedient is reprehensible . . . as a regular occupation, that no man may snatch economic gain for himself to the injury of his neighbors—a condonation of usury protected by such embarrassing entanglements can have offered but tepid consolation to the devout money-lender." Intellectually, therefore, the man from Noyon can be blamed only for blurring Aristotle's and St. Thomas' distinction between earned and unearned interest.

Nevertheless his teaching on usury was a sort of watershed in economic thought, a fundamental dividing line even though apparently little noticed at the time, for in failing to distinguish between earned and unearned income, he helped to pile up the top-heavy mass of credit under which honest money is everywhere buried today.

Even more than by his specific but limited concessions to

unearned interest, he helped to change economic life because his strict economic morality was inspired by a new spirit. Where medieval economic theory had disapproved of the desire to enrich one's self as the sin of avarice, he preferred the diligent handicraftsman or merchant to the monk who was supposed to spend his whole life in prayer and charitable works. Where St. Francis had rushed to embrace holy poverty like a bridegroom the *Institutes* several times put poverty among the greatest evils of this life. Indeed in canonizing the economic virtues of thrift and sobriety the great Devil-Worshipper actually went so far as to declare war against the joy of living. He was indeed a "mirth-controller."

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Shortly after the appearance of the first edition of the *Institutes* Calvin settled in Geneva which to this day is known as his city. The modern traveller remembers the place chiefly for its beautiful scenery, its exquisitely blue lake framed in green meadows and hills and more distantly by snow mountains, its boats with lateen sails like birds' wings, and the clearness of its air. The mirth-controller has been blamed for never mentioning the beauty of the region but the criticism is unjust since admiration for mountain scenery seems seldom if ever to have been felt in his day. Erasmus, for instance, a man very sensitive to the beauty of language, found the Alps only a nuisance.

At Calvin's coming Geneva was a small city with only about fifteen thousand people, but was already of some commercial importance on the Alpine trade routes. Four considerable annual fairs were held there. For some time before his arrival the town had been practically independent.

In Geneva the Church seems to have been in the same dreary state of corruption which we have seen elsewhere. For more than a long lifetime successive Popes had nominated as its bishops younger sons of successive Dukes of Savoy, one at ten years old, another at twelve or at most seventeen, a third the bastard of his immediate predecessor. According to what may have been an exaggeration of Calvin's admiring Scotch biographer Reyburn, "the laxity of Romish rule had produced a moral blindness which saw little evil in vice, and a



moral weakness which consented without protest to many reprehensible practices."

Once settled in Geneva, Calvin discovered new qualities in himself, became in practice the political boss of the city, and set up one of the most complete religious despotisms ever endured in Western Civilization. As one would expect, from time to time there was violent opposition to his rule. In 1538 after some riots he was exiled, but three years later he was invited to return, became more powerful than ever, and successfully maintained his authority until his death in 1564.

The essence of Calvin's regime was that the civil government became a sort of annex or subservient junior partner to the Presbytery or Council of Ministers of whom he was the chief. The local ordinances prescribed two sermons every Sunday and one every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, to all of which everyone, even male and female house-servants, must come when summoned by the ringing of a great bell. On Sundays there was also a compulsory children's catechism. Hired watchmen were authorized to enter private houses at sermon time, under orders to drive everyone to church.

Private confession being no longer the rule, some means had to be found for preventing scandalous evil livers offending zealous Calvinists by shamelessly presenting themselves at the new Communion Service which had replaced the Mass. Consequently "smelling committees" much like those formed in the United States during Federal Prohibition were formed to spy upon the private lives of the citizens and report to the Consistory, a large committee of Ministers and laymen dominated by the former. This Consistory "dealt with" people for an almost endless list of offenses such as playing cards on Sunday evening, spending time in taverns, cursing and swearing, attempting suicide, owning a copy of the *Golden Legend*—a famous medieval collection of beautiful stories about the Saints—kneeling and saying "may he rest in peace" in Latin on a husband's grave, paying for Masses, fornicating, betrothing a daughter to a papist, having one's fortune told, eating fish on Good Friday, making a chalice and other "idolatrous instruments," singing obscene songs, shaving the top of the head in the clerical tonsure, saying that

quartan fever is better than "direction" by the Ministers, that there is no Devil or Hell, that under predestination there can be no guilt, that Calvin "gets himself adored," that no one should be killed for religious reasons, etc. etc.

If the guilty did not amend after being rebuked, the matter was brought before the Municipal Council which was nominally the governing body of the city but was in practice dominated, like the Consistory, by the Ministers led by Calvin himself. Even at a time when he had been temporarily banished, a mirth-controlling "disciplinary law" had been passed providing in part that no one should dance except at weddings, or sing improper songs, or wear fancy dress or enact "maskings and mummeries" on pain of a fine of sixty sous and of being jailed for three days on bread and water. Accordingly the doubtful honor of having invented the system of "morals police" cannot be his.

Nor was the Genevan "Discipline" an isolated thing. In a number of medieval towns guild statutes and municipal ordinances had attempted to regulate the morals of guild members or citizens. Calvin's French biographer, Bossert, tells us that Sixteenth Century Zurich and Bâle made Sunday church-going obligatory. Zurich also imprisoned or exiled convicted adulterers, and fined dicers, card players and those who swore. Berne ordered "the ten pounds formerly paid for eating eggs on Friday to be paid as a fine for drunkenness or for drinking after 9 p.m.," while certain smaller cities subject to Berne and near Geneva put convicted adulterers on bread and water for five days and forbade all dancing except three *honnêtes*—i.e. modest—dances on wedding days.

The Discipline of Calvin's Geneva differed from that of other places in its inclusiveness and especially in the ferocity with which it was enforced. Small towns are always gossipy places where peoples' doings are well known and public opinion is strong, and in Calvin's city everyone, figuratively speaking, lived in a glass house. John Knox the Scotch reformer while in exile there wrote: "In other places I confess Christ to be truly preached, but manners and religion so sincerely reformed I have not yet seen in any place besides." The *Institutes* several times boast that Calvinists, who are often accused of belittling good works because they believe

in salvation by faith alone, really do more good works than Roman Catholics who believe such works essential to salvation.

Knox was only one of a host of consultants or exiles who flocked to the lake-side city. Geneva became a sort of Protestant Rome where advice, guidance and shelter for Calvinists could be found.

Why so many were attracted to the Devil-Worshipper's regime is a puzzle. Perhaps they did not notice any change from the late-medieval mood of gloom to which they were already accustomed. Some may have been impressed by the logic and completeness of the Calvinistic scheme. One is tempted to believe that others felt self-satisfied at being told that they belonged to an "elect" minority. At all events the attraction was there.

How far the savage enthusiasm of the place really purified the souls of the inhabitants is of course doubtful. Americans who have chafed under the restriction of their traditional Christian liberties in the matter of drinking will be amused to read that even in the coffeeless and tealess Sixteenth Century a strenuous attack against the conviviality incidental to the "liquor traffic" was made. In 1546 the Genevan Council ordered all taverns closed and replaced by five municipal *abbayes* where bread and wine were to be sold at cost and under elaborate and drastic regulations. There was to be no swearing, back-biting or slander, no dancing or dissolute company, no obscene songs or card playing except "quietly for one hour"—from the language used it is not clear whether the hourly limit applied to the songs! A Bible must always be prominently displayed, anyone who wished to harangue the company on religious subjects must be permitted to do so, and if psalms or hymns were sung they must be sung reverently. The hosts must not serve chronic drunkards, and must compel their customers to say grace before and after their refreshments. They must permit no sleeping on the premises which must close at nine o'clock. The five *abbayes* were opened but had to close in three months, probably for lack of customers, and presumably taverns of the old-fashioned type were then allowed to reopen.

As to misconduct other than drunkenness, Pastor Reyburn

tells us that "under Rome Geneva had reeked with immorality." He also admits that the city records contained more cases of vice after reform than before but says it was because the government now sought to punish vice. Even the great Devil-Worshipper's immediate family figured in those records. His step-daughter and sister-in-law were both convicted of adultery, the latter flagrantly under his own roof with a thievish servant who was also a hunchback.

Opponents of attempts to make people good by law may laugh at such lapses, but will not be able to force a smile at the fifty-eight death sentences passed upon anti-Calvinist "heretics" of different sorts at Geneva within five years of the establishment of Calvin's new orthodoxy there. Roman Catholics who burned heretics could at least plead prescriptive right. For many centuries their Church had claimed to be the guardian of Our Lord's own message, which must at all costs be preserved intact and pure. Moreover her most convinced opponents could not deny that her claim had been on the whole accepted throughout the West. Consequently, as we saw in Chapter II, she had become inextricably intertwined with the social order, not only as the arbiter of faith and morals whose decrees could affect the soul after death but also as the patroness of art, the protectress of learning, the giver of poor relief and medical care, the assurance of economic security and of a necessary minimum of peace among the Christian men. Even the Communists of today are, in a sense, less radical than the early heretics, for Communist power, however much to be feared, ends with death.

Calvin and his followers, on the other hand, could appeal to nothing except their own private interpretations of ancient documents which had come down to them guaranteed by the old Church which they rejected.

The best known of Geneva's dealings with what Calvinists considered heresy are the cases of Gruet and Servetus. Gruet was a poet among whose private papers the Genevan spy system found abusive writings against Calvin, the Scriptures and all religion. As usual in such cases, he was tortured to make him reveal the names of his accomplices, but he kept repeating that he had none. Consequently the torture was



repeated day and night for a month until he begged for death. At last he was comparatively fortunate in that he was beheaded and not burned. Calvin seems not to have actively joined in the proceedings against him but approved of the action of the magistrates.

Servetus was a Spaniard who might have been popular had he lived today. His eccentric theology might have been praised as "original," while his humanitarian zeal would certainly have been applauded. Born in 1511 two years after Calvin, the Spanish form of his name was Miguel Serveto y Reves. He had studied both law and medicine, and had for a while been secretary to one of Charles V's chaplains. A precocious scholar, by the time he was twenty he knew not only Latin and Greek but also Arabic, some Hebrew and something of mathematics, astronomy and geography. Like so many eager students, he had no use for scholasticism and was a great reader of the Bible. On the other hand, he did not hesitate to contradict Holy Writ when it suited his purpose. For instance when commenting on Ptolemy's geography he said that Palestine was not "a land of milk and honey" in the scriptural phrase but barren and inhospitable—which today is certainly true of most of it. He was an enthusiastic philanthropist who worked hard and bravely as a physician among the victims of several epidemics in or near Lyons.

The essence of his ultra-individualistic thought was his daring speculations about the supreme mystery of the Trinity. He was by no means Unitarian, but from his early youth he had insisted that Our Lord had not been fully God from all eternity and that the man Jesus did not become God Incarnate from the instant of His conception but became so only "progressively" during His earthly life. In 1553 he published a book called *Christianismi Restitutio*, "Christianity Restored" with boastful subtitles asserting that all churches have strayed from the doctrine of the Apostles. Moreover he expressed himself with the utmost violence: according to him the Roman Church is "the most beastly of beasts and the most impudent of harlots," and the orthodox teaching made the Trinity "a three-headed dog like Cerberus"—the monster whom the ancient pagans had imagined as a watch-dog at the gate of Hell.

In attacking the Trinity Servetus took issue with practically all Christendom. Not only were Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics agreed on the traditional formula; every influential leader of the recent religious revolts also accepted it. Calvin himself deigned to approve of the definitions of the early Ecumenical Councils because he held them to be according with Scripture. The Master of Geneva had known the Spaniard and had conducted a controversial correspondence with him. As a result Servetus, who is denounced at least nineteen times in the *Institutes*, had become an obsession of his, and seven years before the appearance of *Christianity Restored* he had written: "If Servetus comes here and if I have authority I will never let him depart alive."

There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Calvin's theological hatreds. Except for certain passages which read like disingenuous, special pleading, his writings are those of a man who is unmistakably in earnest. At the same time he must have seen the tactical importance of distinguishing between his own variety of religious revolution and what he might have called in Theodore Roosevelt's phrase the "lunatic fringe" of the movement.

Moreover Servetus, besides meddling with the Trinity, had agreed with the universally detested Anabaptists in opposing infant baptism. The Anabaptists were everywhere identified with moral and political disorder. Some of them were said to believe that after adult baptism by immersion the members of their sect became so completely the children of God that traditional moral restraints no longer applied to them. Two years before the first appearance of Calvin's great book, when they had gained control of the city of Munster in Westphalia north of Cologne their leader had set up a large harem and with his followers had indulged in orgies of theft, lust and blood. The place had been retaken by its Prince-Bishop who had executed the aforesaid leader only a few months before the first edition of the *Institutes* had been published. It would never do for Calvinism to seem friendly to such aberrations.

Consequently, forgetting for the moment, his hatred of Rome, the great Devil-Worshipper saw to it that the Catholic Inquisitor-General in Lyons should be informed of Servetus'

book and furnished with samples of the latter's handwriting. The heretic was arrested but escaped, perhaps by connivance; then went to Geneva where he was recognized in church and again arrested. Some two months later, after Calvin's political opponents had unsuccessfully tried to make a test case of the matter, he was sentenced to be burned alive. He begged to be beheaded for a reason typical of the day; he feared, he said, that in the flames he might fall into despair and thereby lose his soul. Calvin is said to have supported this request; if so, it is strange that with all his influence he did not have his way. He visited Servetus a few hours before the latter's cruel death, and even his admiring Scotch biographer, Pastor Reyburn, sadly admits that his self-righteousness during that interview is "convincing proof" of a "coldness and hardness of nature . . . (which is) . . . peculiarly unlovable."

The unfortunate Spaniard suffered on the hill of Champel a few miles out of Geneva, a lovely spot now all gardens and vineyards and the center of a magnificent mountain panorama with the snow-capped mass of Mt. Blanc in the distance. In 1903 a monument was set up there with the following remarkable inscription: "To Michael Servetus: we, respectful and grateful spiritual sons of Calvin who nevertheless condemn an error which was that of his (i.e. Calvin's) time, and are firmly attached to liberty of conscience according to the true principles of the Reformation and the Gospel, have raised this monument in expiation." How these Twentieth Century Calvinists combined their loyalty to their founder with their discovery of "the true principles of the Reformation" and their consequent condemnation of their own founder's principles is not clear.

Be that as it may, until his own death in 1564 eleven years after Servetus' execution, the great Devil-Worshipper continued to dominate Geneva, all the time steadfastly preaching his maniac God. Vivid descriptions of his appearance and manner during these later days of his European fame have survived. He was short of stature, and even in youth his shoulders had had the scholar's stoop and his features were already tired by his continual midnight studies. In old age his body was thin and wasted both from his chronic dyspepsia and insomnia and from fasting in his attempts to cure his

frequent headaches. His almost fleshless face with its prominent forehead, aquiline nose, downcast eyes, lantern jaw and long, pointed beard, was notable for its solemn expression and hard profile. His manner was reserved, his dress habitually sober, even somber in color according to his own regulations for others. Apparently he was sensitive to cold, for in the September of his return from banishment the Genevan Council voted him "a coat and some furs." Often when talking he would pause, take off his black cloth bonnet or cap, point to Heaven with his other hand and say: "All for the glory of God."

As his infirmities grew upon him, hemorrhoids and ulcers of the anus were added to his chronic illnesses—one could more easily sympathize with his pains had he been gentler with others. At all events he had the consolation of power. Geneva hung on his every word; his opinion was law in the criticism of literature and art and even as to the merits of a device for saving fuel. His theological and practical advice was reverently sought by religious radicals throughout Europe. One must at least admire his tenacity. He preached almost as long as he had life in his tormented body, and after his last sermon he had to be carried back to his house to die.

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More than that of any other one man, his powerful intellect changed the objective of the religious innovators. Thenceforward their program was less and less to reform what had been the Universal Church of the West, more and more to break up her universality by organizing new, localized religious bodies. Henry VIII would not have dreamed of such a thing. He could no more have foreseen permanent division than he could have imagined a religion which would be true on Sundays but not on Mondays. Even Luther, for all the muddy torrents of abuse which he poured out against the Papacy, was by no means as alien to Catholicism as Calvin. It was the gloomy Master of Geneva who added to the note of hatred the note of contempt. His mighty labor built up a great weapon for religious radicals who—although they still spoke of reform—were really out to destroy what had for so many centuries been called the universal Church of God.



## *XII. No Reconciliation*

RETURNING from Rabelais and Calvin to Charles V and Henry VIII, we left the young Emperor in 1529 after his third failure to persuade the German Diet to enforce the Edict of Worms against Luther and the Royal English Theologian in 1536 after the deaths of Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn.

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Charles although persevering was not unteachable. Although early in 1529, after Ferdinand at the second Diet of Spires had been forced to give way to the German Lutherans for the sake of military help against the Sultan, before the end of that year the Hapsburgs' political position had improved when Francis I—as faithless to his Moslem ally as he was to his duty toward Christendom—suddenly made peace without notifying Suleiman and when the Turkish army retreated after failing to take Vienna. Thus temporarily free to act, the Emperor decided upon a new German policy. He would now try to win the Lutherans back by finding some basis for religious agreement. This has been called “inconclusiveness” or “comprehension.” At that time, however, defined Roman Catholic doctrine had not hardened as it has since done, and in any event it may be easier today to see the matter more charitably. If so, a better word would be “reconciliation.” Charles' Erasmian or religiously indifferent advisers may have reasoned as follows: “These corrupt Italians of the Papal Court have mishandled the Germans. We might now win them back by mildness. After all there has been a lot of moral rottenness among the clergy.” On the other hand they may not have seen that behind the religious differences for which men on both sides would soon be willing to die, there was a social revolution. The Lutherans were out to destroy the vast wealth and legal

immunities of the clergy. They were also inspired by localism. The Emperor may have thought his task easier than in fact it was.

Charles carefully staged his new policy. He would come to Germany and preside in person over a Diet. As a preliminary he again gained some sort of promise from the hesitating Medici Pope about calling a Council. Next he graciously summoned the German "Estates" to meet him at Augsburg, where Luther had argued against Cardinal Cajetan only twelve years before. The Emperor wished, he said, "to hear the well intentioned opinions and ideas of everyone." Besides Aleander who had represented the Pope at Worms, a second Papal Legate was Cardinal Campeggio who had been the agent of Clement's duplicity in England.

When Charles reached Augsburg in mid-June, 1530, on the day before the festival of Corpus Christi he met with a first check. He announced that he would walk in the procession which was to carry the Sacrament through the streets next day but the religious innovators refused to join him, on the strange ground that it was contrary to Our Lord's commands to carry about the consecrated wafer in which His Body was present without also carrying the chalice with the consecrated wine which was His Blood! Charles took the rebuff calmly, answering one noble who said that he would rather be beheaded than march by saying mildly in the Flemish dialect of Low German: "My worthy Princes, no heads shall roll." At the opening session when Campeggio entered and gave his blessing to all, the religious innovators kept their hats on and did not kneel. As to procedure the Emperor would have preferred to begin by discussing the need for help against the Turk, but the Estates insisted on beginning with the religious question, and as usual in Diets they had their way.

Late in June, three innovating "Confessions" or statements of faith were submitted, one of them Zwinglian, i.e. drawn up by the followers of Zwingli, a radical Swiss Reformer who held that no sacrament conveyed inward and spiritual grace—all were merely memorials of Our Lord. The most important "Confession" was that put forward by the Lutherans, and since known as the *Augsburg Confession*. This had

been approved by Luther himself, but since he was still legally under the Ban of the Empire pronounced against him at Worms nine years before, it would have been an insult to Charles to have him appear in person. In legal theory anyone could have killed the outlawed Wittenberger without being persecuted. Feeble though the idea of the Holy Roman Empire had become, it was not quite dead. To anticipate events, it was not finally snuffed out until Napoleon's time. The Miner's Son therefore remained in the fortress of Coburg inside the Saxon border and more than a hundred miles from Augsburg, where he kept in touch with the Diet, receiving and writing a constant stream of letters.

With Luther unable to be present, the *Confession* had been written by his brilliant pupil Philip Melanchthon whose real name was Schwartzerd, in German "black earth," of which Melanchthon is the Greek translation. He was thirty-three, with a slender body, a thin face and a sparse beard. The son of a well known maker of armor in the Rhineland and of an intelligent, pious and affectionate mother, he had entered Heidelberg University before he was thirteen, had been made Bachelor of Arts only two years later and had had to wait three more years for his Master's Degree only because his first application had been refused on account of his extreme youth. Besides Latin and Greek he had worked at mathematics, astronomy, medicine and law. When only twenty-one he had been made Professor of Greek at Wittenberg University where he soon became a popular teacher. Like most Humanists he despised scholasticism, but at first he had taken no definite theological position. At Wittenberg, however, he had come under Luther's influence and adopted the latter's ideas which he substantially maintained thereafter. The Miner's Son became fond of him, worrying affectionately from time to time lest his health might suffer from too much study, while Melanchthon's gentleness long permitted him to forgive the older man's temperamental explosions.

Melanchthon's distinction is that he alone of the early religious innovators was prepared to labor for peace. His *Confession* is dignified and moderately worded. Its key statement is: "We are under one and the same Christ and we serve him," and in general it read more like an invitation to union

than a provocation to religious war. "I myself could not tread so softly and gently" Luther said when he read and approved it. For the moment both the Lutheran Princes and their theologians wished to emphasize how much they differed from the Zwinglians and still more from the Anabaptists and other "wild men."

Melanchthon's *Confession*, which is still authoritative among Lutherans today, has three parts. Part I contains the familiar appeal to "a free Christian Council" in case unity could not be achieved at Augsburg. It maintains that Lutheran Scriptural teaching accords with that of the Universal and Roman Church, and therefore pleads that Lutherans should not be considered heretics merely because they are "somewhat lacking in respect for traditions" which should be amended. The Second Part sets forth twenty-one Lutheran propositions as Articles of Faith. In dealing with justification Melanchthon restored St. Paul's famous text in the Epistle to the Romans to its original form, "The just shall live by faith." Luther in his German translation of Scripture had made it read "The just shall live by faith alone," undoubtedly because he had convinced himself that that was St. Paul's meaning. Melanchthon, however, preferred what St. Paul had actually written, or perhaps he thought the Miner's Son's version provocative. The Third Part lists seven practices of the official Church as "abuses and human institutions." Six of these were the familiar stock-in-trade of the religious radicals: The withholding of the Communion Cup from the laity, clerical celibacy, paying for private Masses, compulsory confession, the current rules for fasting and abstinence, and monastic vows. The seventh complained of the extent of the authority exercised by bishops.

In spite of Luther's previous approval Melanchthon at once began to suffer the fate of many would-be peacemakers—which is to be vehemently attacked by both sides. To this day certain Roman Catholic historians accuse him of insincerity because in his Second Part he mentioned neither Purgatory, absolute Predestination, nor the universal priesthood of all believers. He may not have thought these matters important enough to warrant continued disunity. Also some of his phrasing has been criticized as vague. For instance like Luther



he affirmed the Real Presence of Our Lord's Body and Blood in the Sacrament without either affirming or denying transubstantiation. He said that private confession and absolution should be maintained, but that all sins need not be named.

The conservative theologians present at Augsburg, led by Luther's old opponent Johann Eck, promptly attacked Melanchthon's document. If the Lutherans interpreted Scripture in agreement with the official Church, then why all the violent disturbances, seizures of Church property, etc. of the past nine years? Eck also noted an inconsistency as to the Papacy. In one place Melanchthon had agreed to reverence papal authority if the Pope would agree not to repudiate the Lutherans, while in another he had imitated Luther's habit of calling the Pope anti-Christ.

The written conservative answer to Melanchthon was so offensively worded that the Emperor and the conservative Princes would not receive it. The radicals, Charles insisted, should be won over by moderation. Force should be used against them only as a last resort. As to admitted abuses in the official Church, the Pope should be "justly and reasonably" urged to act. Also the Emperor asked both the Lutherans and the more extreme innovators whether they would recognize him as arbitrator of the religious quarrel. If not, would they obey the decision of a General Council? In that case he would press for such a Council, but only on condition that for the time being they would discontinue their novel religious practices. Meanwhile a committee of three theologians from each party, with the conservatives led by Eck and the innovators by Melanchthon, was to discuss the religious points at issue.

In fact, however, hardly anyone except Charles and Melanchthon desired religious peace. The gentle scholar and one other Lutheran member of the theological committee rightly praised the Emperor's moderation, self-mastery, benevolence and pure private life. Indeed, to anticipate events, only two bastards seem ever to have been begotten by Charles, a small number for a monarch of that time. Perhaps with less justification, Melanchthon also praised him for temperance in eating and drinking—in his

later years an English diplomat saw him drink nearly five quarts of Rhine wine with his dinner.

Moreover neither Charles nor Melanchthon was free to act. Each must reckon with his own party. Most of the theologians on both sides were now as belligerent as Eck himself. At Coburg Luther seems to have repented of his first approval of the *Confession*. Perhaps alarmed at reports of his disciple's willingness to yield further, he began to write fire-breathing letters. Rather than restore the Canon of the Mass and permit private Masses, he was for breaking off the conference. Afterwards he was to say "every bishop brought with him to Augsburg as many devils as there are fleas on a dog on St. John's Day." Even if the Lutheran theologians had been trying hard to reach an agreement by means of mutual explanations, they could have been overruled by the Lutheran Princes who were determined to keep up the quarrel which had made them richer and more powerful. Philip of Hesse scornfully said "Melanchthon walks backward like a crab." By this time Charles must have been learning rapidly.

After nearly two months of fruitless discussion, evil rumors began to spread. Philip of Hesse left Augsburg secretly and in disguise, whereat some said that he had "abandoned the Gospel," while others maintained that he was about to attack the Emperor who had few troops with him. The Landgrave had not asked permission to absent himself, so that his action was an affront to his nominal Sovereign. Meanwhile Charles, alarmed by stories that the local peasants were arming against him and the other religious conservatives, had the town gates guarded by his forces and by the municipal militia. In turn these precautions alarmed the Elector John of Saxony who began to arm for fear that the Emperor meant to take him prisoner.

All this did not forward the discussions of the theological committee. Although agreement was reached on some points, even in the purely disciplinary matter of the marriage of priests the two parties found themselves far apart. Eck and the other traditionalists agreed that many priests were despised by the laity for keeping concubines but insisted that such priests would be still more despised if they were to

marry. Other stumbling-blocks were praying for the prayers of Saints and the utility of good works towards salvation.

To conservatives the admitted abuses of the official Church, however deplorable, were not arguments against her organization and doctrine since she, notwithstanding the human imperfections of her officers, was a divinely founded society. With her apostolic succession and with the Papacy as developed throughout the Middle Ages, she was infallible in the sense that she had always been and still was being preserved from error by the Holy Spirit whenever her supreme authorities defined a point of faith or a general principle of morals. Her Sacraments were divinely appointed means of grace without which salvation was perhaps impossible and certainly very difficult.

The innovators looked at the matter with different eyes. To them the sloth, worldliness, greed, superstition and openly flaunted vice within the official Church contrasted so violently with the Gospel as to cast a doubt upon her doctrines. When the genuinely moral protests of sincere individuals were scornfully rejected as heretical they vehemently asked how much of her teaching was divine and how much of it merely human and worthlessly human at that. Since that teaching condoned or certainly seemed to condone so much wickedness, they would appeal to the Bible and the Bible only. Although the intellectual chaos certain to result from having no religious authority other than endlessly varying interpretations of Scripture was already beginning to appear, they could not imagine how great that confusion would become. Their strange idea of the Holy Spirit inspiring individual believers to interpret Scripture correctly must have blinded them.

Accordingly the innovating governments would neither accept the Emperor as a mediator nor agree to desist from their new religious practices. Also they said that in their States they could never consent either to monastic vows or to the Latin Mass which for centuries had been celebrated as a Sacrifice for the living and the dead.

On the other hand all German parties continued to demand a Council. Why the Lutherans did so is not clear except as a means for gaining time and because they were not ready for a war against the Emperor. The conservatives probably

judged that some good might be done by bringing the Church's supreme authority into play. The religious innovators could not then go on using the Council as a pretext and would be forced either to break openly with all tradition or to submit.

Moreover, as we saw in Chapter IX, even the conservative German local governments were politically unwilling to increase the Emperor's power, and in this they had powerful allies outside of the Germanies. Luther in writing to a friend had correctly anticipated that not only Francis I and the Venetians but also the Pope would oppose Charles. At Augsburg Campeggio was carrying out Clement VII's wishes as zealously as he had done in England, trying unsuccessfully to bribe Melancthon, stiffening the anti-Hapsburg religious conservatives against any possible concessions to the Lutherans by the Emperor, and discouraging the wish of the orthodox German Princes for a reform of abuses in the Church.

Now that agreement appeared impossible Campeggio was for war but the Hapsburgs were unready and were—as usual—short of money. Most of the conservative German Princes were timid. Two great Archbishops who were also local sovereigns and imperial Electors, Albert Hohenzollern of Mayence and Herman von Wied of Cologne were to some extent sympathetic to the innovators. As we saw in connection with Luther's stay at the Wartburg, if a German National Church were set up, Albert seems to have hoped that he might become its head! The Duke of Bavaria was ambitious to be elected King of the Romans which would make him Charles' successor, and therefore did not wish to oppose the Lutherans strongly. The Elector of Brandenburg and Duke George of Saxony were the only conservatives willing to fight.

Accordingly Charles acted as he had done at Worms nine years before, demanding orthodoxy and obedience but not trying to enforce the demand. In September the conservative majority of the Diet voted for the drastic "Recess" or temporary settlement which he proposed but since its enforcement was left to the Imperial Court of Appeals it was an empty formality because that body had no means of compelling obedience to its decisions. The "Recess" included the Emperor's promise, made at the unanimous request of all



three German "Estates," that he would arrange to have Clement VII call a General Council within six months, but even in this he failed. "Preliminary Briefs" were sent out—but with no time and place of meeting or the form to be followed in voting. In reality the Pope would come to no decision, letting matters drag on precisely as he was then doing with the question of Henry VIII's marriage. Ten years were to pass before another attempt at reconciliation was made.

Early in 1531 Charles failed to arrange the election of his three-year-old son Philip as "King of the Romans" and thus heir to the Empire but succeeded in having Ferdinand elected. During the negotiations with the Electors the Lutheran Princes and the Delegates from fifteen Free Cities met in the town of Smalcald and formed an alliance while both Francis I and Henry VIII promised them money for military expenses.

Meanwhile Suleiman was known to be preparing another great army so that—given the military weakness of the conservative German Princes—the only hope for German help was from Lutheran soldiers.

For the moment even Clement VII saw the desirability of making real concessions. Provided that nothing was done against the Faith, he offered to sanction drinking from the Communion Chalice by the laity, clerical marriage according to the Eastern Orthodox custom by which candidates for the secular priesthood are married as deacons and then ordained, and he was willing to suspend sentences in all actions at Canon Law. Even this unusually sweeping program came to nothing. The Emperor came in person to a Diet which he summoned to Ratisbon for January, 1532, but the Lutherans would not come at all and the other notables came late. Chancellor Eck of Bavaria, "that false serpent" as a zealous bishop called him—he must not be confused with Johann Eck the conservative theologian—improved the occasion by whispering to the orthodox Princes that the Hapsburgs were betraying the Faith and that no yielding to heretics could be justified.

The military situation was improved by the moderating influence of Melanchthon and—for once!—of Luther himself, both of them frightened by Philip of Hesse's foreign and

Zwinglian friendships, and by a further concession from Charles who signed a "Religious Peace" with Electoral Saxony and the other already Lutheran governments. He repeated his promise that a "Free, General Christian Council" would be called within six months. Thus Lutheran military support for the Turkish war was again bought at a price. As an anti-climax, during the campaigning season of 1532, both sides acted indecisively, and in the autumn the Sultan was allowed to withdraw unmolested. Moreover in the following summer the Turks agreed to a truce with Ferdinand, although oddly enough not with Charles. To anticipate events, for four years afterwards the Sultan busied himself in Mesopotamia and Persia.

By this time opinion in the Germanies was beginning to turn conservative, Alexander who at Worms in 1521 had feared that hatred for the Papacy would sweep the country, now reported a popular reaction against the disorders caused by heresy. The seed sown by Erasmus among the learned was also bearing fruit. Encouraged perhaps by this development, early in 1533 Clement followed his timid habit of reversing himself, failed to repeat his proposed concessions of two years before, and was joined by the Emperor in promising the calling of "a Free General Council such as the Fathers formerly held." This presumably meant that voting should be in traditional fashion by the individual bishops present, not by "Nations" as at the Council of Constance more than one hundred years before or in any other non-traditional way. Instead of a German meeting place they suggested only three North Italian cities, Bologna, Mantua and Piacenza as possibilities. Clearly such a Council held in Italy would be dominated by a majority of pro-papal Italian bishops who would not interfere with papal revenues, even when derived from admitted abuses.

In fact however, until Clement's death in September, 1534, which we noted in Chapter IX, he kept postponing the fulfillment of his promise to call the Council.

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The fifteen years' pontificate of the new Pope who took the name of Paul III marks the beginning of a change in the

attitude of the Papacy toward moral reform. He was already sixty-six when elected. Born seven years before Leo X and ten years before Clement VII, he had been forty-nine when Luther had fired the German powder magazine. A Roman aristocrat of the Farnese family, his portrait by Titian shows a slender, stooping figure and a thin face with a full white beard and lively little eyes, watchful and cautious. In youth he had fathered two bastards and had been a shocking pluralist who had been made a cardinal because his sister had been one of Alexander VI's mistresses. In old age he was still absorbed in diplomacy, loved luxury and display to the extent of financial extravagance, generously patronized artists and lavishly advanced his descendants and relatives, all of which was in tune with the easygoing habits of the early renaissance Papacy. Nevertheless as Pope he saw the signs of the new time. He could not wholly give himself to ease and splendor like Leo nor was he content to drift irresolutely like Clement. Instead he was ready—seventeen years after Luther's first protest!—timidly to begin the moral reforms which were to be called the "Counter-Reformation."

Paul III's weakness was his inconsistency. No sooner had he been unanimously elected Pope than he made his two grandsons and a nephew cardinals, the nephew and the son of the Pope's bastard's daughter being only sixteen, the son of the Pope's bastard son only fourteen years old! Next, to his honor, he made cardinals of the leaders of the so-called "Spirituals," the orthodox reforming party including Contarini, Pole, Sadoletto and an austere Neapolitan named Caraffa. Also he favored the eager new monastic orders, the Capuchins, the Theatines and especially the Jesuits, whom we shall presently consider in more detail. He did something toward reforming several of the notoriously bribable Courts of the papal judiciary system. He appointed Contarini, Caraffa, Pole and Sadoletto to the Commission which drew up the *Consilium De Emendanda Ecclesia*, the great Report "On Amending the Church" which suggested, as we saw in Chapter IX, the temporary abolition of all the old orders of monks and nuns on the ground that so many of their members lived scandalously—a view not entirely unlike that of Gardiner while Henry VIII was king. Paul III also tried to

compel bishops to live in their dioceses. On the other hand he promised far more than he accomplished. He never acted upon the *Concilium*. Under him the bishops went on living where they pleased. Certain writers have seen something shifty in the brilliant little eyes of his portrait by Titian. In a word, he did not initiate reform; he was carried along by the growing forces which were about to launch the papal counter attack.

As yet it was not clear what line those working for Reform within the papal communion might take. Beyond dealing with what were unquestionably abuses in the official Church, they had a choice. In the spirit of Contarini they might try to win back the separated brethren by charity and sympathy, conceding such Protestant doctrinal demands as might perhaps be granted without danger to the historic Faith. On the other hand after their moral reform they might then return to the hostile spirit in which Luther's first orthodox protests had been met.

It is only fair to note that the obstacles to any Catholic reform were enormous. Over and above the permanent imperfection of human nature, the entrenched corruption of a system with long habit behind it is not easily defeated. Luther himself in 1520 in his pamphlet on *The Liberty of a Christian Man* had said that even a Pope with the best intentions could hardly prevail over the united resistance of his own numerous officials. The abuses had gone on so long that they were taken for granted by those who profited by them.

Before the end of 1534 the Pope had announced to the Cardinals that he was determined to summon a Council to meet at Mantua. His creation of the committee under Contarini which drew up the *Consilium* on Reforming the Church was in a sense a preliminary move, in that some reformation of the Papal Court itself was desirable in order to head off discussion of that touchy matter by the Council itself. The Papal Legates everywhere were directed to notify Christian Sovereigns of the approaching summons—except of course Henry VIII who was at the moment being made Supreme Head of the Church in England by his obedient Parliament.



A special Legate was sent to the German Princes including the Lutherans, now under a new Saxon Elector John Frederick the son of John who had died two years before. At Wittenberg that Legate also saw the Miner's Son himself, handsomely dressed and wearing a gold chain. "We need no Council" Dr. Martin said, "because we are guided by the Holy Spirit, but Christendom needs one in order to recognize the errors which the Church has so long maintained." When the Legate objected that the Council, under the protection of the Holy Spirit, might not hold to what the Reformers thought good, Luther replied: "Certainly I will come to the Council and I will willingly lose my head if I do not make good my propositions against the whole universe. *That which comes forth from the mouth is not my wrath but the wrath of God.*" He said in a sermon about this time: "The Papists knowingly blaspheme Christ, and therefore must be possessed . . . by seventy times seven great barrelsful of devils."

Apparently neither Luther nor the Smalcaldic States were as yet told that the Council was to meet in Italy, for even Philip of Hesse, the most radical Lutheran Prince did not at first openly refuse to come. The joint answer of the Smalcaldic League to the Legate again asked for a "Free Council" and threatened not to come if the order and form of the Council were dictated by the Pope.

At the same time Chancellor Eck of Bavaria made impossible conditions, and Francis I of France, who feared increased Papal and Imperial power as a result of any Council, did everything he could to oppose Paul III's plan. Ferdinand answered that he doubted the Holy Father's sincerity—a pardonable scepticism after the deceitfulness of Clement—and repeated Charles' secret proposal of 1524 to the late Pope by suggesting Trent as a meeting place instead of Mantua. That little Tyrolese city of the Empire not far outside the Venetian republic was partly German-speaking but on the Italian side of the Alps. The Emperor had originally thought it suitable—an obscure but prophetic saying.

As if these obstacles to holding a Council were not enough, Charles now had to act in North Africa. There the Moslems had lost much ground to their Christian neighbors. The

Portuguese had occupied the harbor towns of northern Morocco while the Spaniards had taken Oran in what is now western Algeria, also Malta and Tripoli, which last two places the Hapsburg sovereign had turned over to the Knights of St. John. Except for Tunis and Algiers the chief North African ports in the western Mediterranean had become Christian. The North African situation, however, had somewhat deteriorated when, about the time of Charles' election as Emperor and Luther's debate with Eck, an energetic Moslem adventurer known to Western history as Barbarossa, in Italian "Red Beard," had become master of Algiers, had paid homage to the Turkish Sultan and had begun to harass the Italian and Spanish coasts. In 1534 Barbarossa took Tunis from a feeble Moslem ruler who appealed to Charles, promising to become the Emperor's vassal if he were restored. Want of money forced the elder Hapsburg to choose between acting vigorously in the Germanies or in Tunis. He still hoped to reconcile the Lutherans. He felt it his duty to protect his subjects against the slave-raids of the Algerian Corsair, who would become even more troublesome if allowed to hold Tunis as well. Finally, as the first layman in Christendom, he would rather fight against infidels than against Christians.

He took Tunis in the spring of 1535, illustrating his victory by frescos which he had painted in a little room high up in one of the Moorish towers of the Alhambra in Grenada, but in the following year—while Calvin was publishing his horrible but powerful book—the King of France renewed for the tenth time his claim to Milan, and made a sudden dash at that much coveted city which he failed to reach. Charles, who might otherwise have taken Algiers and made the western Mediterranean a Christian lake, was forced to mobilize in Europe but his counterattacks both in Provence and on the northern French border fell short of decisive results. At the same time Barbarossa, in spite of his loss of Tunis, was still strong enough to raid the Balearic Islands from Algiers. Also the Emperor was still at war with the Turks. Obviously with Europe in such a state it would be most difficult to hold the proposed Council.

If Paul III at that time seriously wished for such an

Assembly his conduct is strange but in June of 1536 almost immediately after the French attack he summoned all bishops in communion with him to meet at Mantua in the following spring. Of course his choice of an Italian meeting place snuffed out all hope of accomplishing anything in the Germanies. Melanchthon continued to grieve over the prospect of prolonged religious discord but the Lutheran Princes ordered him to draft their refusal to attend, and he sorrowfully felt himself compelled to obey for fear of increasing the disunity already so evident among innovating theologians.

Melanchthon's draft complained that the Pope had already called the Lutherans heretics, and that in the Council papal bishops would judge Lutheran complaints against the Papacy. Since the Duke of Mantua was not well known in the Germanies, his city might not be safe for Lutheran delegates. Lutheran ministers could not go because they could not be spared from their ordinary duties of instructing the people. Finally Luther's doctrine was certain; it was "without doubt the true teaching of the Catholic Church of Christ," not new but only primitive Christian teaching revived and explained. Consequently the Lutherans were in no way to blame for the Schism, for they could never separate themselves from the unity of the Catholic Church. The Lutheran Princes signed Melanchthon's statement and forwarded it to Paul III together with the latter's invitation unopened.

Meanwhile Francis I went on making difficulties without actually refusing, and the Duke of Mantua refused point-blank on the ground that he might not be able to maintain order unless the Pope would subsidize an armed force for him, a proposal which Paul III refused as unseemly. Then the Pope suggested the city of Vicenza, in Venetian territory, as a meeting place. After long negotiations the Senate of the Republic of Venice consented, but so much time had been lost that the date of the meeting had to be put off until May of the following year.

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We saw in Chapter IX that the deaths of Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn left Henry VIII free to reconcile

himself with the Papacy had he chosen to do so. His confiscation of the smaller English abbeys would of course have made a difficulty but that difficulty might have been got over, especially since Contarini's Committee which Paul III had called together was about to propose even more drastic anti-monastic action.

Instead the Royal Theologian made no move towards submission to Rome. He continued to uphold every article of the Catholic Faith as then defined in the West. Also he went further than any government has ever done in trying to enforce what had become traditional discipline and practice, insisting against all reason that the marriage of priests is forbidden by God's law and decreeing legal penalties against anyone who did not confess and communicate once a year. Under him heretics were burned and papalists were hanged—and often drawn and quartered as well—for high treason. Meanwhile his cruelty was exasperated by personal misfortunes and by fear of the survival of his dynasty.

Late in 1536 he had a fright when first Lincolnshire and then Yorkshire rose in rebellion. Both sets of rebels claimed that they were only demonstrating against certain new taxes and to some extent against the suppression of the smaller monasteries, for both of which they held their Sovereign's "bad advisers" responsible. Incidentally Queen Catherine had said the same thing throughout her troubles! Nevertheless successful insurrections often go far beyond their original objectives. Southern England was alarmed because people there thought of the Northerners as semi-savages as Englishmen thought of the Scottish Highlanders in 1745. Today it is hard for us to realize how localized the lives of the masses were throughout the intellectually cosmopolitan society of our ancestors. Even today the Yorkshire dialect is a standing joke in London.

Henry had only a handful of regular troops—Sixteenth Century governments had far less powerful means of coercing insurrections than governments of today—but on the other hand he had his prestige as an anointed king. While mobilizing militia forces under the able command of the old Duke of Norfolk, he began with blustering propaganda: "How presumptuous are ye, the rude commons of one Shire, and



that one the most brute and beastly of the whole realm and of least experience, to find fault with your Prince for the electing of his counsellors and Prelates, and to take upon you, contrary to God's law and man's law, to rule your Prince whom you are bound by all laws to obey and serve with your lives, lands and goods." At the same time he made certain promises which he did not mean to keep and a number of statements some of which were true while others were false.

How much the rebels were moved by religious and how much by economic and political grievances no one can say. In the isolated and thinly peopled North what our own time would call the social services performed by the monasteries were more valued than in the South because they were more necessary. The monks had maintained sea walls and bridges, entertained travelers, educated the young and relieved the poor, sometimes in haphazard fashion and with only a small part of their revenues, but no one else was doing these things! Moreover the beauty of their buildings and the spiritual comfort of their Church services were appreciated. The humanistic New Learning had taken no root in the North. Even at that, in Lincolnshire only one locality formally petitioned for the restoration of all the suppressed abbeys. Most of the shire was content to ask for the reestablishment of some of them. Both peasants and the lesser gentry were suffering economically like their fellows in the Germanies. On top of all this came the new taxes. The sparks which lit the fire were lying rumors that parish churches were to be reduced in numbers and that their ornaments were to be confiscated like the smaller abbeys. In Lincolnshire there seems to have been no request for a return to papal authority.

The trouble in Lincolnshire proved a fire of straw. The local gentry slipped away and the leaderless poorer men were presently dispersed. Within two weeks the country was quiet again. At first the King punished no one, for he still had much on his mind.

The Yorkshire rising was more serious and its religious elements more definite. The rebels called it the "Pilgrimage of Grace." Their banner and badge showed Our Lord's Five Wounds. Besides the same grievances as in Lincolnshire, the Yorkshiremen asked that certain heretical books be destroyed,

that Princess Mary and not Elizabeth be recognized as Henry's heir, and that the Pope's authority be restored. Also some of the leading men of Yorkshire were with them. The "Pilgrims" swore to commit no crime, to preserve the King's person, to purify the nobility from upstarts, to suppress heresy and restore the Faith of Christ. The movement, however, had the same weaknesses as in Lincolnshire. It was impossible to rise against the King's government but not against him.

Henry's chief military asset was his field commander the tough old Duke of Norfolk, Anne Boleyn's uncle, now sixty-two but still vigorous and delighted to be recalled to service in order to wipe out the disgrace which he and all the Howards had suffered through his niece. He had great prestige in the North as victor over the Scots at Flodden twenty-three years before. He and Henry fooled the rebel leader, a prominent lawyer named Aske, a conscientious man but vain and easily flattered, with lying promises. Before the end of October the "Pilgrims" had dispersed, and some two months of temporizing followed.

Early in December an assembly of the Yorkshire leaders drew up a detailed manifesto. They listed all the religious points previously mentioned but put in a significant reservation as to the Papacy. While repeating their demand that the Pope's supremacy as to the care of souls be restored, they also proposed that the consecration of bishops by him should be "without any first fruits or pensions to be paid to him, or else a reasonable pension for the outward defense of the Faith." Now "first fruits" meant that a newly consecrated bishop must pay into the papal treasury a sum equal to his entire annual income from his bishopric. Thus even the "Pilgrims" who had taken up arms for the Pope's spiritual authority proposed a drastic reduction of old-fashioned papal taxation.

The reference to the Papacy—which of course involved the Royal supremacy—was not particularly stressed. A zealous and even somewhat partisan Roman Catholic historian of our day characterizes that reference as "casual." By contrast, the Yorkshiremen's catalogue of non-religious grievances is formidable and detailed. They protested against enclosing Common Lands, against the new taxes and against the power of

the King's Court of Chancery to supersede the old English Common Law by the Roman Civil Law. They asked protection for the old customary right of tenants against rent increases, that the King should no longer pack the House of Commons, that the next Parliament should meet at York, and so on. They complained that they alone in the kingdom were not allowed to own "hand guns" and crossbows.

Meanwhile criminal elements were beginning to take advantage of the disturbed conditions, and Henry was strengthening his forces. Before mid-December a great crowd of "Pilgrims" again assembled to receive the royal pardon. When Norfolk presented the impressive document with the King's Great Seal, Aske and his followers knelt down and tore off their badges of the Five Wounds while Aske cried: "Henceforth we will wear no badge but that of our Sovereign Lord." The rebel forces then dispersed for the second time.

Since there was no redress of grievances, in January, 1537, local northern risings again broke out. Henry, however, now had the game in his hands, for the northern gentry with their local prestige and their armed servants had by this time come over to his side. Also he now had a clear legal case for any punishment which he might inflict, for the new outbreaks nullified the recent Pardon. Those who had led the various risings, including that in Lincolnshire, were all executed, Aske among them, together with a number of obscurer men. Some suffered the full penalty for treason, but most were simply hanged to save trouble. One chronicler notes that, although it was mid-winter, one might have thought it was autumn—the trees were so full of "strange fruit" which, as the bodies decayed, threatened to fall on passers-by.

Before we blame Henry too much, however, it should be remembered that on this occasion his total of recorded death sentences was only two hundred and sixteen—a trivial figure compared with those executed by Charles V after the revolt of the Spanish municipalities, or with the hundred thousand said to have been killed in crushing the German Peasants' War. Also by no means all of those condemned to death under the Tudors were actually executed, since research has found not a few individuals alive and well years after being sentenced.

However, for centuries throughout Western Christendom it had been customary that any cleric, before being punished by the civil government, must first be solemnly degraded from his privileges by members of his own clerical order. The Tudor now symbolically had the priests and monks whom he was executing in the North hanged in their clerical robes like laymen. The change was symbolic. In England the revolutionary attack upon the medieval position of the clergy, of which monastic wealth was an important part, would now go forward.

With the conservative North thoroughly cowed, Henry and Cromwell saw that they could safely suppress the larger Abbeys. They now had a new legal means of doing so, since the greater northern Abbots had been active in the risings, and presumably a religious corporation of which the head was a traitor was itself traitorous. The process was extended to cover all England, until by the spring of 1540 the last monks and nuns had been dispossessed, some of them as a result of treason trials of their abbots, most through "voluntary" surrender as a result of threats.

Few of the pious intentions announced by Henry as reasons for his suppressions were carried out. Only six of the eighteen new bishoprics which he had proposed were actually founded. Some of the confiscated wealth presently had to go for rearmament, some as gifts to men of influence—"spreading the graft thin," an American political boss would have called it. Most of it slipped through the King's fingers and those of his successors in one way or another, in his case through thriftlessness, thus founding a new English aristocracy very different from the old.

Artistically the suppression meant a lamentable loss of beauty. Economically on the other hand, there was a gain which will be described later in this book.

Too late to cooperate with the northern risings, Pope Paul III moved. He was ill-informed about England and had made Bishop Fisher's death more certain by inopportunistically making him a cardinal. In medieval theory, not explicitly disavowed from the Vatican to our own day, the excommunication of a Sovereign made that Sovereign liable to



deposition. The difficulty, especially now that papal prestige was low, was in getting such a sentence enforced. The belated news of the northern English risings, however, encouraged hope at Rome that either Charles or Francis, or both of them together might act.

The Pope's instrument to sound out the Emperor and the French King was Henry's cousin, Reginald Pole, who had recently been made a cardinal although he had not yet been ordained a priest. Born in 1500, Pole was slender, with a long ruddy face, a flowing beard and a constitution so delicate that he was often ill. He was related to the Royal Theologian on both sides, and since there was no stigma of illegitimacy in the Pole line, the young Cardinal's elder brother Henry who was Lord Montague, Reginald himself and his younger brother Geoffrey had a better hereditary right to the Crown than the Tudors—and well the suspicious King knew it.

Nevertheless Henry Tudor had been kind to his young cousin Reginald, making him the absentee beneficiary of various ecclesiastical posts according to the evil custom of the time and financing his studies at the great University of Padua in Venetian territory. Pole, an upright man without worldly wisdom, was at first devoted to the King. He was swept along by the humanistic current of the New Learning, and made friends with the Orthodox reformers known as the "Spirituals" of whom Contarini and Bishop Caraffa, afterwards Pope Paul IV, were the most prominent. In Chapter IX we glanced at his part in the famous *Advice on Amending the Church* in 1538.

There are stories of the violent language in which the conscientious young nobleman phrased his reforming zeal. A somewhat doubtful witness makes him set down a formidable list of accusations. English bishops and monks are "ill occupied," the monks are "idle abbey-lubbers . . . apt to nothing but . . . to eat and drink." Most priests "can do nothing but patter up their Matins and Mass, mumbling words which they do not understand." Bishops should live on a quarter of their incomes, spending another quarter on church building and repair, another on maintaining poor scholars, and the rest in relieving the poor. Cardinals often

buy their promotions and are unworthy of them. The Pope's unlimited dispensing power is an evil thing, "The which for money his officers do sell."

Pole, however, had broken with Henry over the latter's insistence on annulling his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. He had written of the Tudor, "he stands on the brink of the water and may yet save his honor; but if he put forth his foot but one step forward, all his honor is drowned." Later he had confidentially sent to Henry a book which he had written against the Royal Supremacy, of which his Roman Catholic biographer Schenk says: "... the word 'frantic' does in a sense, apply to it." It likens the King to Cerberus the fabled three-headed dog at the mouth of the Pagan Hell, to the Grand Turk, Domitian, Nero and Satan himself. It also suggests that the English people were about to rise in rebellion against their wicked monarch—a hint very dangerous to the one who made it. Contarini thought the tone too bitter but could not persuade the author to change it.

Although as Legate Pole carried with him a large sum of papal gold which was to finance the war against the Tudor, his embassy to Charles and Francis was a complete failure. Neither Sovereign would even see him, and both promptly made him leave their territories.

The year 1537 gave Henry another and even greater triumph. In October Jane Seymour bore a boy who was christened Edward. The child was puny and the mother soon died of fever, but the Royal Theologian now had the male heir for whom he had yearned so long.

In the following year, however, he and Cromwell feared invasion when Charles and Francis were reconciled. In England every effort was made to prepare for war. The suppression of the larger Abbeys was pushed to provide money. For the sake of treasure and as a gesture of defiance to the Pope, Henry had St. Thomas à Becket's tomb at Canterbury desecrated, and seized the immensely rich gifts which so many pilgrims, including himself in earlier days, had left there. Men were mustered and trained, and coastal fortifications of the new type designed to mount defensive artillery were built. Those of Cardinal Pole's family who were still in England were arrested on suspicion of treason, and the

Cardinal's elder brother was executed on doubtful evidence, as were certain other noblemen of royal blood. With the two great continental Sovereigns now at peace with each other, the best foreign ally that could be found was the Duke of Cleves, who had strategically important territories in the Lower Rhineland, a Roman Catholic but a political opponent of Charles. At Cromwell's suggestion Henry married Cleves' sister Anne but when he met her he so disliked her that he did not consummate the marriage.

In fact England had never been in danger. Even in the great days of the Papacy Sovereigns had denied the Pope's deposing power, and now it was no longer taken seriously. When Charles and Francis began to prepare for another round of their permanent quarrel, the reason for Henry's alliance with Cleves disappeared. The Tudor, seeing himself again safe in the center of the diplomatic see-saw, promptly arranged to annul his marriage to the wife who disgusted him, "the great Flanders mare," as he called her. He was financially generous to the placid Anne who contentedly settled down to live in England.

Next the Royal Theologian had his faithful servant Cromwell killed, as heartlessly as he had thrown to the wolves his father's tax-gatherers thirty years before, then Wolsey who had been his chief Minister and also his boon companion, and Anne Boleyn to whom he had been faithful so long. One thing Henry's victims had in common; all were unpopular. The old nobility and especially Norfolk were delighted at the fall of Cromwell who was a vulgar upstart. Incidentally that despoiler of monasteries said on the scaffold that he died "in the Old Religion."

Before Cromwell's fall, however, he in alliance with Cranmer—who had secretly come to hold "advanced" religious opinions—had tricked the King into licensing an English translation of the Bible with radical versions of various key texts. An English priest named Tyndale and after him a former "Austin"—i.e. Augustinian—friar named Coverdale had made English versions with Erasmian and Lutheran wordings and others of their own such as making the Greek "ecclesia" read not "Church" but "Congregation." Thus the famous text "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I

will build my Church" had become "I will build my Congregation." Tyndale had added still more radical notes which Coverdale had softened down. Since Cranmer saw that these notes were still giving too much offense, he and Cromwell palmed off on the King the so-called "Great Bible" which substantially reproduced the Tyndale-Coverdale text without the notes.

One wonders why Henry who had Gardiner and other conservative theologians to advise him permitted this. However he had always been slack about details, and now as he approached fifty his syphilis was gaining on him and his immoderate eating and drinking was making him fat and sluggish. Later when the clergy in convocation protested, he told them that he would have a new text made—which he never did.

Cromwell's fall increased the conservative influence of Gardiner and Norfolk. The old Duke, although glad like most nobles to accept monastic lands as royal gifts, disliked other religious novelties. He and Gardiner managed to throw in the King's way Catherine Howard, a handsome young woman who was, as Anne Boleyn had been, the Duke's niece. She was nineteen, thirty years younger than Henry who promptly married her, not knowing that she had been unchaste with two or three men. Presently she renewed her intimacy with one of her former lovers but at first the Tudor, of course not knowing this, was delighted with her. He fondled her in public and even recovered some physical vigor, often taking long rides. Nevertheless her time was short. Cranmer, devoted to his master and secretly a religious innovator, gave Henry a written account of some of her misdeeds, and she was beheaded about a year and a half after her marriage.

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Returning to Charles and Ferdinand, in 1537 the military difficulties of the Hapsburgs remained very great while the obstacles to holding a Council increased. The radical Lutherans, led by Philip of Hesse, took advantage of the situation. By this time the Smalcaldic League included several princes in the northern Germanies who had recently



turned Lutheran, and no less than twenty-nine of the Imperial Free Cities. In March before the campaigning season opened, they voted to recall all Smalcaldic contingents serving with the Hapsburg Armies against the Turks, and agreed that as far as their members were concerned, not one of the three German "Estates" should consent to the proposed Council unless the other two did so, even if the Pope were to permit the secular Estates to vote. They also talked of holding an "Evangelical" National Council, for which Philip of Hesse's theologians urged both Greek and Bohemian precedents. John Frederick of Saxony who believed "every word of Luther's teaching to be divine," asked Luther to draft an agenda for "A Free Christian Council." The Miner's Son therefore drew up the violently worded *Articles of Smalcald*. The Mass was "a most enormous and terrible abomination, a dragon's tail in the track of which followed innumerable abuses, vermin, reptiles," etc. The Pope was "purely and simply a devil, for . . . against God he puts out his lies about Masses, purgatory, monkery and good works," and "persecutes, damns and kills all Christians who refuse to . . . honor these abominations of his." In the event, disunity among the religious innovators prevented the holding of the proposed "Evangelical Council."

It was nearly twenty years since Luther had set the Germanies on fire. The Papacy had given what was to become Protestantism time to take root.

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A few weeks before the signing of the insulting *Articles of Smalcald* Contarini's Committee handed to Paul III the reforming *Consilium*.

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In 1537, fortunately for Charles, an unwise Turkish declaration of war upon Venice forced that Republic with her sea power to come in on his side. Moreover French inactivity limited Turkish operations in the Mediterranean to the landing of a raiding force on the heel of Italy from which the raiders were soon compelled to withdraw overseas. On

the other hand, in Hungary the Turks destroyed an army of Ferdinand's.

While this was going on the Council naturally could not meet. When the Papal Legates who were to preside reached Vicenza in May they found only five bishops awaiting them. Accordingly Paul III again agreed to postpone the Assembly, saying that he would recall it to Vicenza at some time in the next year.

1538 might have been as dangerous for the Hapsburgs as the year before, but Suleiman turned northeastward to punish a Moldavian rebel, and in June Francis again made a separate peace with Charles without consulting the Turk. France was financially exhausted by so many wars and by her King's love of building, to which we owe so many beautiful Renaissance *chateaux* in the soft Loire country. Next in 1539 after an indecisive naval campaign in the Mediterranean and as a result of the usual friction between allies, the Venetians, who had gone to war most unwillingly, made a separate armistice with the Turks. Thus the hostilities, already narrowed down by the withdrawal of France, were reduced to minor operations between the Sultan and the Hapsburgs.

Meanwhile the truce between the Emperor and the King of France momentarily reversed the European diplomatic situation. Both Henry VIII and the Lutherans were even more frightened than they had reason to be. In fact Francis had no intention of losing the political support of the German religious innovators. He continued to make overtures to the Lutheran Princes, and a number of the more important among them signed a treaty with him, in the belief he had saved them from a Council and from the transformation of the elective Empire into an hereditary monarchy. The innovating Free Cities, however, would not ally themselves with Francis who was persecuting religious dissenters in France so strenuously that the Pope begged him to be less ferocious.

Henry VIII, with Cromwell and Cranmer by his side, drew up a manifesto or circular letter to "The Emperor, Christian Princes and all true Christian men," praising the Councils of former days which were "free and universal," and protesting vigorously against Mantua and Vicenza. The proposed Council, he said, would be only a "pretended General

Council," because the same pro-papal bishops would be both "advocates and adversaries . . . , accused and judges . . . , to the extinguishing of the true preaching of Scripture that now beginneth to . . . spread abroad." Such an assembly could result only in "The troubling of Princes' liberties . . . the diminishing of Kings' authorities and . . . the great blemish of their princely majesty." He also made the point that the "usurped" authority of the Pope must amount to little since it could be flouted by a mere Duke of Mantua.

Henry VIII's learned men had informed him that at least the first four Ecumenical Councils recognized both by the Eastern and Western Churches had been called not by the Popes but by the Christian Emperors of Rome and Constantinople. Since the Hapsburg Emperor was ready enough to act against the Papacy in other matters, one wonders why, if he knew this, he seems not to have insisted upon it.

With France peaceful and the Turks quiet, the Hapsburgs decided on another attempt to reconcile the Lutherans by means of theological conferences. Ferdinand was heartily in favor of the idea. Some years before he had said that he himself could not find a confessor who was not either a "fornicator, a drunkard or an ignoramus." He favored not only disciplinary changes such as clerical marriage and communion in both kinds but also some modification of doctrine with regard to mortal sin.

The hope for reconciling the Lutherans now had strong support within the Vatican itself. The so-called "Spirituals" led by Contarini were zealous for disciplinary reforms and had long looked upon the religious troubles in a very different way from that which had prevailed in Rome under Leo X and Clement VII. As we saw in former chapters, the Venetian Cardinal had opposed the theory of papal despotism, and had rebuked Clement's undue absorption in the petty temporal concerns of the States of the Church at the expense of Christendom. He had even blamed so radical a work as Luther's *Babylonish Captivity of the Church* chiefly on the corruption of the clergy and especially of the Papacy. As the principal author of the *Consilium* he had also favored at least the temporary abolition of the older Monastic Orders.

The "Spirituals" were for trying new methods. Some years

previously Contarini had ended a treatise addressed to the Lutherans by saying: "We need not muster . . . heaps of books, Ciceronian orations or subtle arguments. Let us rely on the honesty of our lives and on humility, desiring only the good of Christ and of our neighbors." He had written Johann Eck as follows: "Our duty is to continue steadfast in prayer to the God of peace and unity, that he may send down His Holy Spirit from Heaven into our hearts and restore the unity of His Church. Therefore I believe that it is our part to strive by goodwill and well-doing to put our opponents to shame or to bring them to think shame of themselves for separating from brethren who are filled with love." In a word, Contarini has always remembered that separated Christians were still his brothers in Christ, and that "Charity hopeth all things." He and Pole had studied the *Augsburg Confession*, and from its moderate tone Pole—whose judgment was not always good—seems optimistically to have believed that reunion would be easy.

As to theological reconciliation the "Spirituals" had a certain amount of elbow room because the Church had never formally defined any doctrine of justification. Far from Lutheran though the Spirituals were, nevertheless they were as passionately interested in the problem of justification as any Lutheran. After all it was no heretic but St. Paul himself who had written: "The just shall live by faith." In 1539 the finding of a formula which would include both faith and good works in the scheme of salvation might well be a long step forward toward Christian unity.

By this time the religiously conservative German states had long been dissatisfied both with Hapsburg policy and with the papal failure to call a Council. On the other hand they were weakened because ducal Saxony was now Lutheran under an energetic Duke named Maurice who had fallen heir to the principality in succession to his uncle, Duke George, the strong conservative who had presided over the Leipzig Conference of 1519. This increase in Lutheran strength, however, was considerably neutralized when Philip of Hesse—who had been suffering from syphilis and at the same time had been unsuccessfully trying to stir up a war against Charles—weakened his own political position by committing



bigamy. Although he was a most licentious man, he had a religious scruple against receiving Communion while continually committing adultery. Having now partially recovered from syphilis, he was violently attracted by a young lady whose mother refused to allow him to possess her daughter without marrying her. Since the Lutheran theologians and especially Luther himself vehemently opposed annulments, the Landgrave found himself in a dilemma. A way of escape seemed to appear when he remembered that the Old Testament patriarchs had been polygamous and that the New Testament nowhere explicitly restricted anyone except bishops to one wife. Further, if he were legally allowed to cohabit with the lady of his choice he would then be able to take Communion with a clear conscience. He therefore applied to Luther and Melanchthon for a dispensation to marry bigamously.

The sardonic humor of what followed may be briefly passed over. The Miner's Son and his more sensitive disciple were sorely tried. On the one hand the Landgrave was important to the Lutheran cause. Moreover his scriptural arguments accorded with their doctrine of the literal inspiration of the Old Testament as well as the New. On the other hand they realized that people were not prepared to accept the example of the Old Testament patriarchs to that extent. Bigamy was legally punishable by death. Finally with the consent of their local sovereign the Saxon Elector they permitted a bigamous but secret marriage ceremony which was duly read over Philip and his young lady by his court preacher in the presence of Melanchthon and another witness acting in behalf of John Frederick. Incidentally, the Landgrave had previously squared his original wife—who had just borne him a daughter—by lavish promises, and had sent Luther a whole cartload of Rhenish wine.

Of course the secret was not kept. Both the court preacher and the mother of the bigamous bride blabbed, and soon the story was everywhere. Melanchthon was deeply distressed. Luther was furious at Philip for not having kept the promised secrecy better. John Frederick of Saxony threatened to withdraw his political support. At this the Landgrave, furious in his turn, accused John Frederick and another Lutheran

Prince of unnatural vice, claiming intimate personal knowledge of their alleged acts for which the legal penalty was burning alive. A Hessian preacher wrote a *Dialogue* maintaining that compulsory monogamy was an abuse on a par with clerical celibacy, monasticism and fasting. Luther thought of publishing an attack upon this pamphlet but did not do so, and in the long run all the important objectors were reconciled to the culprit.

For the time being, however, Philip was politically so discredited that he was willing to listen to Hapsburg proposals.

Incidentally it is only fair to note that all scandals were by no means Lutheran. Joachim I Elector of Brandenburg when attending Diets had customarily dressed his mistress in men's clothes and brought her with him. The conservative Duke of Brunswick had buried a mistress in effigy while really hiding her in his hunting lodge.

Even more important than Hesse, in the summer of 1540 Henry VIII annulled his marriage to Anne of Cleves, had Thomas Cromwell killed, and married Catherine Howard, thus turning toward the conservative side in religion and to the Imperial side in policy.

At a conference called by Charles in Frankfort at which neither of the Hapsburgs was present a six months' truce with the Lutherans was agreed upon and a series of theological conferences planned. The Emperor was to inform the Pope and the latter was to send representatives. Oddly enough the chief Hapsburg agent at Frankfort went beyond his instructions by promising that Charles, even against the Pope's wishes, would confirm any German religious agreement that might be reached.

All this was far from the young Emperor's ringing declaration against Luther at Worms nineteen years before.

The Saxon Elector and the unhappy Landgrave of Hesse accepted ungraciously but they agreed to send representatives. The Papists, they said, had so far refused instruction on all points. They themselves refused all arbitration "except that of Christ." Nevertheless they accepted, Philip coming in person, and three conferences followed, first at Spires, next at Haguenau, then at Worms. It was reasonable to hope that a firmer truce might result from even a partial reconciliation

between the contending theologians than from the mere postponements hitherto made. The German conservatives were divided politically, and also differed among themselves as to justification by faith, in respect to which widely varying opinions were still permitted within the official Church. Everyone knew that disciplinary reforms were needed, and theologically the Hapsburgs were determined to "stretch the circle" of permitted Catholic opinion as far as they could. The Pope might insist that nothing concerning the universal Catholic Faith could be decided in a purely German assembly, but if influential and conservative German theologians should find that certain supposedly heretical Lutheran teachings were not really heretical then it might be difficult for the Vatican to resist both the political pressure for reconciliation and the sincere desire for it. Some such theologians were already trying to bridge the gap.

The delegates quickly adjourned from Spires to Haguenau in Alsace, a little north of Strasbourg, on account of one of the local outbreaks of plague of which the records of the time are full. The Papal Legate to the Germanies, although annoyed at not being notified of the Spires meeting in time, followed them to Haguenau where they conferred for about seven weeks before adjourning late in July, 1540, to meet again in October at Worms. Unfortunately the debates at Haguenau had suffered from the absence of Melanchthon who was ill. Calvin, temporarily exiled from Geneva, was a delegate from Strasbourg and supported the unsuccessful attempts of French diplomats to intrigue with the Lutherans.

During the adjournment Suleiman's Christian puppet-king of Hungary died. Profiting from this, Ferdinand occupied a certain amount of territory including several important towns. Consequently, what with Henry VIII's change of policy, the Hapsburgs now had still another political success with which to offset the Lutheran gains in the Germanies.

Granvelle, who presided at Worms, enlarged upon the misfortunes which had resulted from the religious quarrel. The Papal Nuncio followed by recalling Our Lord's prayer for unity in the Garden of Gethsemane. Various Lutherans replied harshly. Even Melanchthon, now well again, for once did so, blaming the wickedness of the conservative clergy and

papal opposition to the Gospel. Nevertheless after nearly two months an agreement on original sin was reached by means of what a Roman Catholic historian recently called "an elastic formula which was considered an encouraging success." Further discussions were then adjourned to another conference over which Charles himself was to preside at Ratisbon in the spring of 1541.

The chances for reconciliation were increased when Paul III consented to the Emperor's request that Contarini, who of all great Churchmen of the time most desired peace, be sent to Ratisbon as a special Legate. Moreover the conference was enlarged by the inclusion of representatives of Henry VIII headed by Gardiner, the foremost English Churchman after Cranmer. The Bishop of Winchester—splendidly attended by no less than a hundred horsemen "all in grey velvet with great gold chains on their necks," which pomp may have been intended to show that the Church of England was by no means impoverished, met Charles in the Low Countries and accompanied him to the Conference. The Emperor carefully stage-managed his own appearance, travelling slowly overland from Flanders with only a small escort in order to show his confidence in his nominal German subjects.

The notables reached Ratisbon only in April. During the opening ceremonies the Lutherans ridiculed and insulted the High Mass sung by Albert of Mayence, and loudly jeered when on Maundy Thursday Charles performed the traditional ceremony of washing the feet of certain poor men.

The Emperor, however, was not to be put off. The reader will remember that a chief Lutheran doctrine was that of Salvation by Faith in the sense of confidence, by which sinful man is justified in the sight of God by the merits of Our Lord which are "imputed" to the sinner and cover that sinner's imperfections as with a cloak. It had occurred to certain conservative and loyal but conciliatory German theologians that this Lutheran idea could be reconciled with traditional Orthodox-Catholic teaching as to free will and as to the usefulness of good works in helping to save the soul. To this end a Dutch scholar named Albert Pigghe whose name is usually found in the latinized form of Pighius had worked



out a doctrine known as Double Justification. In youth he had been a pupil of the future Pope Adrian VI, and later he had studied not only theology but also mathematics and astronomy. He had taught mathematics to Paul III before the latter's election as Pope. His idea of Double Justification was that man, inspired by the Holy Spirit, realizes his sinfulness, freely turns to God and performs good works, thus acquiring a preliminary "Justitia Inhaerens" or Inherent Justification, so called because it is partly due to his own efforts. This, however, would remain imperfect were it not supplemented by a second act of God who by His grace "imputes" to man, through man's faith in Christ's perfect sacrifice on the Cross, a complete Justification, a "Justitia Imputata" which no human effort could help to achieve.

This idea of Pighius had been taken up by two younger theologians, Julius von Pflug a Saxon, and John Gropper a Westphalian. Pflug had just been elected Bishop of Naumburg in Electoral Saxony but had been prevented by John Frederick from taking possession of his bishopric. Gropper was a canon of Cologne. Together they had drafted a conciliatory document known as the *Ratisbon Book* which the Emperor secretly showed to Contarini on the latter's arrival.

Meanwhile Chancellor Eck of Bavaria was playing his usual double game, urging Philip of Hesse to shun the Hapsburgs and to work for an independent understanding between the German Princes of all parties, and on the other hand trying to persuade the Emperor to attack the Protestants. This Charles refused to do, objecting that he had no money, that a German civil war would be deplorable, and that if defeated the religious innovators would call in the Turks and French. In Paris Francis was telling the Papal Nuncio that Contarini was disposed to concede too much to the Lutherans, while at the same time the "Most Christian" King was directing his agents at Ratisbon to tell these Lutherans that he was anxious for an understanding with them.

At Ratisbon the Venetian Cardinal was the soul of the proceedings. He easily saw through the Bavarian intrigues, writing to Rome that Chancellor Eck and the Bavarian Dukes were only trying to lead the German Conservatives as Saxony and Hesse led the Lutherans. Also he rebuked the undue

combativeness of Luther's old opponent Johann Eck who was present. He made polite conversation on neutral subjects with Hessian preachers, warned the Emperor to his face against false doctrines, and accepted the so-called *Ratisbon Book* as a basis for discussion after adding some twenty amendments of his own.

As at Augsburg eleven years before, a theological committee of six was appointed. Melanchthon and two Hessians, of whom we need remember only the name of Bucer, were the Lutherans—the reader will remember that at the moment Hessian zeal for agreement was stimulated by the increasing political friendship of the bigamous Landgrave with Charles. The conservatives were Pflug, Gropper and Johann Eck. Since the last named was certain to oppose reconciliation, one wonders why he was named.

The six theologians promptly began discussing the important matter of justification by Faith, the doctrine by which Luther had attacked first Indulgences and then the entire penitential system. Gropper brought forward Pighius' doctrine of Double Justification.

For the moment this had an immense effect. Contarini, fully believing it Catholic, openly showed his joy in the achievement of what everyone had thought to be impossible. Pole wrote to him from Italy that Double Justification was like a partly hidden pearl, always possessed by the Church and now available to all. Granvelle jubilantly copied out the wording of it in his own hand. Not only Melanchthon but also a number of other Lutheran theologians were delighted because the formula included their favorite phrase "imputed righteousness." In spite of Johann Eck's objections it was unanimously approved by the other five members of the theological committee. In the words of a strongly anti-papal Nineteenth Century English historian: "To the astonishment of the reformers . . . for a time sincere hopes were entertained of a reconciliation."

In fact the agreement on justification needed supplementing. At the moment, in the absence of any defined Roman Catholic dogma on the subject it was certainly a "permitted opinion"—the debates at Trent to which we shall come in the next chapter should convince anyone as to that. Never-

theless, had the Ratisbon formula of 1541 been finally accepted as Roman Catholic doctrine it would have had to be accompanied by some limitation of the Lutheran idea that a man is saved when he believes himself to have been saved, and also by safeguarding free will. The golden pen of Erasmus had forcefully called attention to that last point.

At Ratisbon, however, when the Theological Committee went on to other matters, theological and political obstacles now appeared. Theologically the chief stumbling-block was, as it still is, the idea of the Church. It was now more than twenty years since Luther had gone over into heresy. The Germans had not followed him in a body as some had at first hoped or feared. Also Erasmus had split the humanists. Nevertheless both the theology and the political position of the religious innovators had had time to harden. Moreover in the background of the theological debates there was the fact that the movement which the Miner's Son had started and Henry VIII in his own very different way had continued was by no means exclusively religious. Indeed in the Royal Theologian's time in England it was theological only as to the still undefined relation of the Pope and the Church. Both in England and the Germanies what has come to be called the Reformation was already a social revolution which had abolished the legal privileges of the clergy and transferred vast masses of wealth from clerical to lay hands. To return to communion with the Pope, no matter on what terms, might bring future demand for restitution. In view of this, one would gladly know more about Gardiner's actions at Ratisbon. Strangely enough the able Bishop, as spokesman for Henry VIII's national Catholicism, seems not to have played an important part. His biographer notes only that he always spoke on the conservative side except with reference to the powers of the Pope.

Contarini was for disciplinary reforms, especially of the bishops, and for a reorganization of conservative preaching and education—in both of which the Protestants were admittedly superior. He also favored communion in both kinds which had become a badge of revolt against the medieval religious autocracy of the clergy. Why he opposed the marriage of priests which Clement VII had been willing to

accept in its Greek form in 1532 we do not know. Nor is it clear why no common ground could be reached at Ratisbon as to Confession and Absolution, since the Miner's Son himself had long believed Penance to be a sacrament and since some progress toward reconciliation on that point had been made at Augsburg in 1530.

Besides these matters, the religious innovators were now settled in their hatred of a number of traditional beliefs and practices. Monasticism, to which the Anglican Communion has returned, was to them a crime against nature. To pray for the prayers of the Mother of God and of the Saints was to them idolatry, a worship of creatures instead of the creator. The Canon of the Latin Mass with its sacrificial implications they thought a blasphemous denial of the one perfect sacrifice of Our Lord on the Cross. Calvin, whose dark shadow was destined to grow longer, had already made that point with his geometrical accuracy of language. As to the Eucharist in general, the Great Devil-Worshipper wrote from Ratisbon: "Melanchthon and Bucer drafted equivocating and ambiguous formulas on transubstantiation, each seeking to hoodwink their adversaries." Among religious radicals hardly anyone except Melanchthon was willing to agree that the Pope had some rights including that of calling General Councils. Not even the Miner's Son's gentle disciple could bring himself to say that General Councils were infallible—the point on which, more than twenty years before, Johann Eck had trapped Luther.

Meanwhile as at all Diets the opportunity for contact between the leaders made Ratisbon a sort of forcing-house in which diplomatic business ripened quickly. John Frederick of Saxony pointedly refused to come, ordered his representatives to make no peace with "murderers and idolatrous Princes," and at the same time urged all Germans to ally themselves against the Hapsburgs. Granvelle kept repeating to the Emperor his fear that all the Germans, the Italians, the Netherlands and even the French might break with the Papacy. Charles, thus worked upon, was determined to bring about some agreement. Speaking confidentially to the Saxon delegates, he called upon God to witness that with German



help he would undertake reform even if the Pope did not consent. He made secret political arrangements with Philip of Hesse, with Maurice the heir to Ducal Saxony and with Joachim of Brandenburg.

None of these three Princes, however, was willing to commit himself on the capital point, i.e. the religious question. Even the bigamous and therefore politically weakened Philip seems to have ceased urging his Hessian Preachers to labor for theological reconciliation. All the Lutheran governments stood together against further dogmatic agreements and insisted that the agreements already reached be interpreted in a wholly Lutheran sense, without reference to the conservative parties to those agreements. Luther's attitude may be judged from his comment on Bucer, the Hessian scholar who had worked for agreement on Justification and on the Eucharist, "Bucer," said he, "is one of the false brethren who, like Judas, are more dangerous than all open enemies."

The power of the Lutheran politicians over their theologians is shown by the conduct of Melanchthon. That peace-loving man, now estranged from the fiery Luther because of the latter's increasing irritability, was more afraid of his local Sovereign, the fat John Frederick of Saxony, than of the Emperor. Presently therefore Melanchthon spoke so fiercely in the theological committee against the traditional organization of the Church that his violence ended all hope for further agreements. On the conservative side Johann Eck, in spite of Contarini's rebukes, again began demanding unconditional surrender, bluntly saying: "Those who wish to become one in the Faith must submit to the Pope and the Councils, and must believe what the Roman Church teaches. Everything else is only wind and vapor." Since further meetings of the theological committee would have been useless, that body which had first met on April 27 was finally adjourned on May 22. Pole's biographer Schenk writes: "The failure of the negotiations has lain heavily upon Christendom ever since." Some two months later when Charles urged upon Contarini that the Lutherans, as at Augsburg eleven years before, were willing to reintroduce sacramental confession and that the difference over the Eucharist concerned only the

word "transubstantiation," the Cardinal found himself forced to answer that he himself had always meant to leave the final decision to the Pope and must do so now.

To anticipate events, when news of the proceedings reached Rome many Churchmen there blamed Contarini for having seemed to make concessions to heretics. Paul III, however, expressed no opinion and silently approved of his Legate's conduct by keeping him in office.

Meanwhile at Ratisbon Melanchthon told the Lutheran notables that although he had accepted the *Ratisbon Book* as a basis for discussion, he now found that he had been so misled by its tricky language that he had not understood its implications. On their side the conservative members of the House of Princes rejected the *Book* as full of errors and inadmissible doctrine.

Charles saved what he could. He rejected a series of sweeping proposals made by the Lutherans who demanded complete religious sovereignty for their local governments, interpretation of the theologically agreed articles in the light of the *Augsburg Confession*, and the maintenance of their own position as to the points still in dispute. They also aggressively suggested that the Emperor act against the conservative local governments by insisting upon clerical marriage and communion in both kinds. Wishing to avoid war and at the same time to check the increase of heresy as much as he could, Charles took the unprecedented step of urging a small measure of tolerance. Let the agreed articles bind both parties, he said, and let the others not be further discussed until there should be either a final German settlement or a general, ecumenical one. This was too much even for the moderate and charitable Contarini who agreed that there ought to be no war but maintained that false teaching should be rebuked gently but constantly. For him a clear statement of sound doctrine was as necessary as peace among Germans. On the other hand the Emperor's proposal was not enough for the Lutherans.

Accordingly Charles, having again failed to achieve full doctrinal reconciliation and receiving no support for any tolerance, again fell back upon his old policy of mere postponement. He would urge the Pope promptly to call a

General Council, and if within eighteen months no such Council was forthcoming, then he himself would either call a German National Council or another Diet. Meanwhile let all German affairs remain as they were.

This pleased nobody. The German conservatives complained that the continuing Protestant sacrileges were left unpunished. The Lutherans demanded further concessions. Once more considering the militant radicals more dangerous than the feeble conservatives, the Emperor softened the language of his proclamation toward the former, injuring his reputation with the conservatives by doing so without notifying them before publicly reading the document. At the same time, however, he made a gesture toward the latter by joining a defensive league of the conservative German States which had been formed some years before.

He then left Ratisbon for Italy on his way to attack Algiers, the last stronghold of the North African Moslem pirates. Bad news was coming from Hungary, most of which Suleiman had annexed as a Turkish province, turning the churches into mosques and massacring Christian prisoners by hundreds as was his vile habit. The Emperor must have been happy to put the contentious Germanies behind him in order to fight infidels. In the Diet of 1541 he had succeeded in dividing the Lutherans politically. Although his attempts at religious reconciliation had ended in failure, with Contarini's and Melanchthon's help he had at least seemed to make some progress toward reunion. For four hundred years since then no one has done as much.

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As a chief reason for his failure we should note once again the passage of time. Twenty-four years had passed since Luther's *Theses* had suddenly made the Miner's Son a national hero in the Germanies—three years more than the interval between the Armistice of 1918 and the renewal of the war in 1939. As the Diet of Ratisbon adjourned, the religious divisions of the West were already beginning to harden.

Within little more than twelve months Contarini would be dead.

### *XIII. Trent Forecloses Debate*

THE Council of Trent ends what we have called the period of cross-currents and sets the stage for the Religious Wars.

We have likened the varied events of that phase of the Reformation which began in 1527 and ended in 1545 to confusing tidal currents before a new tide begins to run true. Although those troubled eighteen years were anything but calm, sailing men dependent upon the wind might also compare them to the light "cat's-paws" of air from different directions which are often felt before the end of a calm at sea. Presently a more persistent breeze takes hold. Usually you first see it coming at some distance over the water, next your flags begin to tremble and then your ship comes to life as her sails fill.

A sailor might say that at Trent the Papal Court and in general the supporters of the "Old Religion" began to "lay a course" with reference to the Religious Revolt. That course history has called the Counter-Reformation.

Contemporaries must have found it hard to believe that the Council—thinly attended by a mere handful of bishops and repeatedly ignored or defied by the governments of Christendom—was laying a course which the Roman Catholic communion would follow for at least twelve generations but those contemporaries were like people standing close under a tall building and therefore unable to see its outline and proportions. To us the importance of Trent is clearer.

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The mark of the new phase is the change in leadership. Hitherto the center of our stage has been held by laymen, first the Elector Frederick and next the greater Sovereigns, Charles V, Francis I and Henry VIII. In England between the First Session of the Council and its final adjournment this was still true. There during those eighteen years each religious



change came with the coming of a new monarch. At Trent, however, the Papacy soon took control and maintained it, thanks to devoted men who bore up St. Peter's Chair. The Counter-Reformation was from below. Even without the Religious Revolt there would almost certainly have been a reform of the ignorance of the lower clergy, the worldliness of their clerical superiors and the slackness of so many throughout the whole clerical body. The new zealous Orders were all founded without reference to the religious rebels.

Two of these new Orders were especially important: the Capuchins and most of all the Jesuits.

Three other bodies, however, deserve mention: the Somaschi, the Barnabites and the Theatines. All were founded as Italian "Congregations" with no special reference to Protestantism. The Somaschi, originating at Venice, cared for orphans and served heroically in hospitals and plague-stricken towns. The Barnabites at first centred their activities at Milan, preaching in public and celebrating the Church services with special solemnity. The Theatines took their name from the Italian town of Chiete or Theate where one of their founders, Caraffa—later Pope Paul IV—was Bishop. They became a byword for austerity. Barnabites and Theatines became regular Orders, extending their work beyond the Alps and into missions to the heathen. Both, together with the Jesuits and the Somaschi, were "Clerks Regular," groups of dedicated men, most of them priests, bound by stricter vows than those of the secular clergy yet able to mingle more freely with the people than even the Begging Friars of St. Francis and St. Dominic.

The Capuchins were an offshoot of the Franciscan Order, founded with the idea of returning to a literal and strict observance of St. Francis' rule of Holy Poverty from which other Franciscans had more or less departed. They took their name from *capuce*, an Italian word for hood because they wore large hoods sewn to their robes and cut square after a fashion which they maintained to be that of St. Francis himself, although other Franciscans had pointed hoods. Also the Capuchins' robes were of especially coarse cloth.

A Capuchin historian, Father Cuthbert, maintains that their Reform . . . "illustrates . . . something of what the

normal development of . . . Catholic reform . . . might have been if the . . . Protestant revolt had not turned the Catholic world into an armed, defensive camp." These zealous Franciscans loved poverty for its own sake.

Their founder, Matthew or Matteo da Bascio, an Italian Franciscan of peasant stock, had long thought that St. Francis' rule was being insufficiently observed. His discontent came to a head one day when he and the other brothers of his friary while returning from a funeral came upon a half-starved and almost naked beggar lying by the roadside. The others, being hungry, pressed on, but Matteo stopped, wrapped the poor wretch in his own cloak and tried to comfort him before following them. In 1525 he felt driven to break with the outward forms of monastic discipline. Slipping away from his friary by night, he went to Rome personally to implore the Pope for leave to observe St. Francis' rule to the letter. In Canon Law his flight made him technically an apostate, not of course in the sense of one who had abandoned the Faith but in the sense of a renegade monk, one of the many vagabond monks whose behavior scandalized the time. Father Cuthbert observes, however, in words which Protestants might use of some of the early rebels against the Papacy, that "when a soul is being strangled, the laws which hinder that soul from spiritual freedom no longer hold." He continues: the Franciscan spirit required an organization which "while securing . . . the common ideal would yet leave room for corporate as well as individual varying expressions of the common life." In other words there should be unity without undue uniformity.

By good luck, perhaps assisted by a niece of the Pope's who revered Matteo for his heroism during one of the innumerable outbreaks of plague some years before, the truant friar met Clement VII in a Vatican corridor, unceremoniously prostrated himself and begged for audience. It is pleasant to record that after a moment of annoyance, the worldly Medici Pope was touched. Requiring Matteo only to attend the annual chapter of his Franciscan province, Clement gave him leave to go about the world preaching by word and by example.

Matteo's example attracted companions zealous for "the

supremacy of the spirit in religion as against the worldliness which had invaded the Church," and the infant Capuchin body became a living part of "the religious reaction . . . everywhere making itself felt both within the bounds of orthodoxy and in the unorthodox revolutions which were already rending Christian society." Nevertheless until about 1538 the early Capuchins had to struggle repeatedly against powerful opposition to their separate and distinctive existence. "The noble Contarini," as Father Cuthbert calls him, befriended and supported them.

The Capuchins owed little to Matteo for organization and leadership. They elected him Vicar-General in spite of his tearful remonstrances but the responsibility so weighed upon him that he soon insisted upon resigning. His vocation was that of a wandering preacher and not that of an executive. Some time after 1536 this saintly individualist left the Order and died as a homeless friar.

One cannot imagine St. Ignatius Loyola leaving his own Order. Indeed the Jesuit Society, "the Clerks Regular of the Society of Jesus" to give them their full title, was created by his burning zeal and genius for organization. In Chapter VII we have already glanced at his conversion. He had been baptized Iñigo, the name of a local Saint revered in his native province of Guipuzcoa, but later he called himself Ignatius, after the First Century Saint and martyred Bishop of Antioch. He was hardly more than five feet tall, with a beaked nose and a permanent limp from the wound in his leg which we noted at the end of Chapter VII. Beyond that we do not know what he looked like, for his age of unequalled painters has left us no portrait which those who knew him thought satisfactory.

He was a Spaniard whose people for nearly eight centuries had been absorbed in the Reconquista, the reconquest of their country from the Moslem. Their campaigning on the harsh central plateau of the Iberian Peninsula with its blazing summers and freezing winters had tempered them like steel. We have already noted their amazing endurance in arms. As Belloc observes in his *How the Reformation Happened*, Loyola was a Basque, a gentleman and a soldier. The astonishing energy and determination of Basque athletes is familiar today, as is the persistence with which that little

people has maintained its unique language. The name of Guipuzcoa seems to mean either "to terrify the enemy," or "we will tear you to pieces." Spaniards and Basques in general were not partial to half-measures.

As a gentleman Iñigo belonged to a class which was proud of its high breeding and its ability to command. Even in our own envious democratic days, hereditary distinction is not entirely negligible, and then it was vastly significant. If some Jesuits have been accused of snobbishness, St. Ignatius himself realistically noted that for an aristocrat to accept poverty and obedience implies a greater renunciation than for a poor man. He himself could not hide his social rank. Even in the early days of his own conversion when he voluntarily limped about in rags his accent marked him as a gentleman. Also he was always willing to advance the kingdom of God, as he understood it, by taking advantage of the snobbery of others. When entering Rome in 1537 he said to his companions: "Let us avoid all relations with women except those of the highest rank."

His four years of soldiering stamped him for life as similar experiences have done with many men of our own time. To him the Church was a monarchical body wholly subject to the Pope as an armed force is to its commander. The Constitutions of his Society carry over his passion for religious unity into a military insistence upon uniformity "in clothing, in the ceremonies of the Mass, in opinion of doctrine and in judgment on matters of business." He called his manual of devotion the *Spiritual Exercises*, exercises being then the military term for Drill Regulations. He himself after his conversion combined the utmost enthusiasm with carefully considered action. Those who knew him said that he was like a flame. At the same time no planning section of an army staff was ever more deliberate and thorough.

At first he spent nearly a year at the village of Manresa near Barcelona, embracing voluntary poverty and vehemently practicing the greatest austerities. Indeed he carried these very far, leaving his nails untrimmed, flogging himself nightly until his shoulders were bloody, and fasting so often that for the rest of his life he had acute stomach trouble which made



all food disagreeable to him. After prolonged spiritual agonies he found peace and somewhat modified his regime.

Interestingly enough, in later years when directing others he invariably forbade extreme asceticism. He even discouraged unduly long prayers—there was always so much work to be done.

His first idea was to go to Palestine as a lay-preacher to the infidels. When on arrival he found that Turkish law made this impossible he returned and decided to become a priest. For this he must study Latin, philosophy and theology, so he—a man of thirty—gladly humiliated himself by enrolling in a class of little boys for two years. He next went to the University of Alcala and then to that of Salamanca. At both universities, however, he was examined by the Inquisition because, although a layman, he continually evangelized people who would listen to him. Certified as orthodox but grieved at being forbidden to teach, he went to the University of Paris. During his seven years there, he may have passed Rabelais in the street. At the college of Montaigu so detested by both Rabelais and Erasmus he may have met Calvin. Again he was examined by the local Inquisition, but this time by more intelligent Inquisitors than in Spain, so all went well. Meanwhile he studied hard, apparently thinking of scholarship only as a necessary instrument toward the priesthood and the saving of souls.

At the same time his consuming zeal was attracting others—the future St. Francis Xavier, a Basque and a gentleman like himself, Faber a French-speaking Savoyard of peasant stock, Laynez the son of a Castilian merchant and the great-grandson of a converted Jew, and Salmeron who had been a poor boy in Toledo.

The first sign of what was to be the Jesuit Society appeared only in 1534, when St. Ignatius was over forty and thirteen years after he had been wounded at Pampeluna. Early in the morning of the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady on August 15 of that year he met with those just mentioned and two others in the University Quarter on the Left Bank, crossed Paris and went out to Montmartre, the “hill of the Martyrs,” so-called in honor of St. Denis of France and certain

other early Christians who had suffered there. The place, then outside of the northern fortifications of the city, was largely deserted except for an old church on the spot which is today the intersection of the Rue Antoinette and Rue des Martyrs. Some of its stones had been a part of a pagan temple. They went down into its crypt where Faber, recently ordained and as yet the only priest among them, said Mass. Just before receiving the Host, all recited a vow promising to observe poverty, chastity and obedience to ecclesiastical superiors, and after having finished their studies to go to Palestine to convert the infidels as Ignatius had already tried to do. If that proved impracticable, they would go to Rome for orders from the Pope. As yet they were not especially concerned with Protestantism, although Faber used to pray daily for Henry VIII and Luther.

Seven more years passed before the Society was formally organized. When the Turkish declaration of war upon Venice in 1537 had indefinitely postponed their pilgrimage, Ignatius sent to ask the Pope to allow them to be ordained priests without benefices to support them. Paul III who had just received the great *Concilium*, the report of Contarini's committee on reforming the Church, realized the sincerity of the petitioners and granted their requests. While preparing to travel to Rome they coined a famous phrase. When asked who they were they agreed to answer: "We are of the Company of Jesus"—a company already being the regular unit of military organization.

At Rome several influential men including Contarini took the Exercises under Ignatius' direction and constituted themselves defenders of the embryo Society. In the following April, 1541, while Charles V and Contarini were opening the Ratisbon Conference, the Clerks Regular of the Society of Jesus made their final vows, including one of special obedience to the Pope as to missions. They were to go wherever he might send them, even when without money for traveling expenses—their leader had already lived by begging or on voluntary charity for nineteen years. Their Constitution was despotic like that of an armed force. Under the Pope, they owed absolute obedience, in everything short of sin, to

their General who was elected for life. Their novitiate or period of probation was to be long. Unlike all previous Orders they were not to spend time in chanting the daily canonical hours. They were to give their whole time to pastoral or missionary work and study. Saint Ignatius was unanimously elected General except for his own vote, and after much searching of conscience he accepted.

Eager recruits flocked to them. Belloc has called them "a weapon of steel." St. Francis Xavier's name and those of their heroic missionaries to the American Indians remind us that they by no means forgot their original objective of evangelizing infidels but most of the earliest Jesuits labored in Europe. Even before there had been time to adopt their Constitution an advance guard of them had been thrown in on the German sector of the Protestant front.

The bitterest opponent of the new Orders could not deny their sincere devotion, for as individuals they had nothing to lose. Thenceforward the Popes were like commanders of an army shaken by a sudden attack which now has determined reinforcements coming up.

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Turning from the new Orders to European statesmanship, after the adjournment at Ratisbon in July, 1541, Charles V joined the forces which he had been preparing against Algiers. On his way he met Paul III in northern Italy, to hear that the Pope had persuaded Francis I to promise not to renew the perpetual French-Hapsburg war—at least while the Emperor was fighting infidels in Africa! Also Charles had to listen to bitter papal reproaches because the Ratisbon Recess provided that if the long-postponed General Council were not opened within eighteen months then either a National German Council or another German Diet would again discuss the religious question. To all medieval theory, this was unjustifiable lay meddling in religious affairs which only the successor of St. Peter was competent to decide.

The Emperor embarked in mid-September with a powerful expedition, which included Cortes as a volunteer, and laid siege to Algiers, but a severe storm wrecked many of the ships,

blew down the tents of the army, wet the powder and spoiled most of the provisions which had been landed, so that it was decided to return.

Charles' calmness and cheerfulness throughout the many discomforts of the return voyage somewhat compensated for his loss of prestige, but meanwhile Francis had again been renewing the French alliance with Suleiman. Late in May, 1542, the Pope consented to Trent as a meeting place and ordered the bishops to assemble there in November, but in July the "Most Christian" King of France for the fifth time declared war.

This made the assembling of a widely representative Council again impossible for the time being, since few if any French or German bishops could now be expected to come. Paul III persisted, but before the new year only a handful of bishops had gathered at Trent under the presidency of three Cardinal Legates. Early in January, 1543, Charles' Chancellor Granvelle appeared at the head of a delegation sent by the Emperor and asked for the use of the Cathedral pulpit to address the little gathering. The Chancellor's son who was Bishop of Arras accompanied his father and was to read the message. Moreover the Western Church had often granted to orthodox, Catholic Emperors and their representatives privileges not enjoyed by other lay-sovereigns. Nevertheless to allow any member of a delegation sent by a layman and headed by a layman to speak in the Cathedral might imply that the Council was subject to Charles, which was precisely what the Pope and his Court wished to avoid. The Legates therefore consented to hear the message only in a non-religious hall. The elder Granvelle's acquiescence was an omen for the future.

Nevertheless the Emperor's representative was able to control the situation. He told the Legates—it is not certain that any other bishops were there to hear him—that his master's object in insisting upon the Council had been to reform the morals of the clergy, that only the war had prevented Charles' coming in person, and that they were to do nothing of importance until the arrival of German and Spanish bishops which might be a matter of weeks or even months. Granvelle then left Trent for Nuremberg, leaving



behind him Mendoza the Emperor's Ambassador to Venice as a sort of watchdog over the Council. The latter repeated Charles' peremptory orders, and then showed his contempt for the ill attended assembly by returning to his post in Venice. In July, 1543, the Pope and the Cardinals decided that this undignified situation was no longer tolerable, and consequently "suspended" the Council indefinitely.

Meanwhile a series of events had foreshadowed, even more closely than the Legates' refusal to receive Granvelle in Trent Cathedral, the line which the Papacy of the Counter-Reformation was about to take. The reader will remember that Contarini, Pole and in general the so-called "Spirituals" also desired to reconcile the Protestants theologically if that could be done within the boundaries of the historic Faith. Among the "Spirituals," however, there was one conspicuous exception. Cardinal Giovanni Pietro Caraffa the Theatine, the eldest and one of the most influential members of the group, was all for rigid measures. In June, 1542, the easygoing Farnese Pope Paul III was persuaded, perhaps by Caraffa himself, to set up a local Inquisition in the Papal States with the latter as Grand Inquisitor. Henceforward the civil government of the Popes themselves was to be called upon to burn those convicted of heresy.

The Theatines had long suspected a popular Italian preacher, a Capuchin named Ochino who had been elected Vicar-General of his Order in 1538, of holding the Lutheran doctrine of justification by Faith alone. His blameless life and tireless labors had told in his favor, but his sermons had given increasing cause for suspicion, and in July, 1542, while in Venetian territory, he was courteously summoned to Rome by order of the Pope. Seeing in this summons the work of his enemy Caraffa, Ochino was frightened but finally started to obey. At Bologna he saw Contarini who was acting as Papal Legate there. The noble Venetian, always a friend to the Capuchin Order, was dying—according to one English authority "dying of poison administered by the reactionary party," a story which, one hopes, is untrue. Renaissance Italians were great poisoners, but it is not certain that any slow poison was then known. What passed between Contarini and Ochino has been variously stated. The Cardinal, who

himself had been blamed by many for supporting the doctrine of double justification at Ratisbon the year before, may have increased the friar's fears. Ochino, still intending to go to Rome, next went to Florence where he met three acquaintances, all equally suspected of heresy. They convinced him that his life was in danger so he fled to Calvin's Geneva, dying at last after wandering from Edward VI's England to Poland and after professing several different Protestant theologies.

Contarini's death, together with the flight of Ochino and of several other suspects, strengthened Caraffa in favoring repression. Although in the Papal States the Inquisition remained mild throughout the rest of Paul III's Pontificate and even afterwards, nevertheless from that time on the Popes and their advisers were more than ever determined to do nothing which might seem to make the slightest concession to justification by Faith alone.

In 1543, Suleiman occupied nearly all Hungary, turning the churches into mosques to show that that kingdom was no longer a Christian vassal state but a Turkish province while for once the Turkish and French navies cooperated in the Mediterranean, raiding far and wide along the coasts and sacking the city of Nice where the French looked helplessly on as their Moslem allies carried off Christian prisoners to the slave markets of Constantinople. At the same time the Duke of Cleves and certain French contingents skirmished and raided in the Netherlands. Charles allied himself with the excommunicated Henry VIII, and concentrated against Cleves, forcing its Duke to surrender and giving him moderate terms. By this time although he was only in his early forties, the Emperor's health was failing. Although he was no drunkard, he habitually drank deep and over-ate. Also his undershot jaw prevented his chewing his food properly, and as a result of all this he had become gouty and was so thin that in order to wear his armor he must first put on a great doublet thickly wadded with cotton. He advanced into French territory but presently retired.

Early in the next year he presided over another Diet in Spire. Again he was conspicuously polite to the Lutheran

leaders. When the fat John Frederick of Saxony fell over sideways in trying to go down on one knee in reverence to him he kept a straight face instead of smiling. Also the Emperor went further than ever in making promises to the Protestants. The German religious quarrel, he said, should be healed at a "General, Christian, Free Council of the German Nation," or at a Council held in Germany—his exact words are differently stated. The Lutherans, seeing their nominal sovereign in alliance with the anti-papal Henry VIII, may have thought that laity as well as clergy might be allowed to vote in such an assembly. Meanwhile Granvelle was privately telling those same Lutherans that his Master would arrange for some religious concessions whether the Pope liked it or not. At the same time Cardinal Morone who was acting as Nuncio was disgusted with the German bishops. "They," he reported to the Vatican, "are drunken, incontinent, theologically ignorant, without respect for Rome and anxious to free themselves from obedience to the Pope. Since they wish to live in peace, if only for their own lifetimes, they are rushing at full gallop toward concessions, and are delighted that the Lutherans do not mean to seize still more Church property." In talking with John Frederick, Charles admitted having strained his own conscience, but during the Diet he had at least gained the Saxon Elector's cousin, the active and ambitious Duke Maurice of Saxony.

Paul III protested violently against the Spires decisions, hinting that he might excommunicate the Emperor for allowing laymen—and heretics at that!—to have a voice in religious matters. This, the Pope publicly wrote, was the sin of the Jewish High Priest Eli whom God punished for unduly indulging his sons. Charles paid no attention, and Calvin dryly remarked that a Pope so indulgent to his own bastards might well fear the sin of Eli. Incidentally Paul, whose family had no hereditary claim to Milan, wanted to have one of those bastards made Duke of Milan by the Emperor.

During the Spires Diet the French won their first big victory in Italy for nearly thirty years, routing an Imperial army at Ceresole in Piedmont, but failed to improve their success. Meanwhile Barbarossa raided the west coast of Italy,

and Charles advanced from Flanders to the neighborhood of Chateau Thierry and Soissons. Forced to detach troops to his northern frontier, Francis I offered peace, again without reference to his Turkish ally. The Emperor, always preferring peace to war against Christians, accepted—correspondingly deserting his own ally Henry VIII whose troops had taken little part in the principal campaign.

With Hapsburg prestige increased by having signed a treaty on French soil, the Pope decided to forestall whatever the Emperor might do, and therefore summoned the Council to meet at Trent in the following March. Thus he could organize the Assembly himself, thereby minimizing the part to be played by the Lutherans whom Charles might support to an inconvenient extent. Three Cardinals, Del Monte who was afterwards Pope Julius III, Cervini afterwards Pope Marcellus II, and Pole were named Legates. The first two, arriving in March, found only the local bishop and one Neapolitan bishop awaiting them. A few other prelates presently turned up. For fear of assassins believed to have been hired by his cousin Henry VIII, Pole sent one of his servants disguised as a cardinal by the direct route, and himself came by a roundabout road with an armed escort.

Meanwhile in January, 1545, a German Diet had opened at Worms to which Charles, detained by an attack of gout, sent word that if the Council did not quickly complete the work of reform he would summon another Diet to discuss the German religious question. This was enough to frighten the Pope into ordering his Legates formally to open the Council even if the attendance remained very small. Charles who reached Worms only in May, reminded the Diet that he could not forbid the Council which a whole series of Diets had repeatedly joined him in requesting. Luther, still of course absent and now in poor health, surpassed himself in violent language, calling the Emperor to lead in a war against the Pope, the Cardinals and the "Roman Sodom" until the Germans could wash their hands in blood.

The chief business at Worms was done in secret. The young Cardinal Farnese, the son of Pierluigi who was one of Paul III's bastards, had been appointed Nuncio to the Diet. On his way thither he stopped at Trent and persuaded the



Legates there not to open the Council formally until the intentions of the elder Hapsburg were known. When he reached Worms he was secretly told, to his astonishment, that Charles would make war on the Lutherans if papal subsidies were forthcoming. In fact the Emperor meant to attack only the Lutheran political extremists while allying himself with other Lutherans, but the distinction between the two sorts of religious rebels may have been blurred for the Pope's benefit. At first the Cardinal thought that his grandfather was being asked for money only for some private purpose of Charles' but the latter convinced him of his political good faith by consenting to the Pope's plan to make Pierluigi Duke of Parma and Piacenza, over which cities both the Emperor and the Pope as a temporal Prince claimed sovereignty. The bargain—shabby enough on the Pope's side—was kept. Charles did not protest when Paul III promptly proclaimed Pierluigi hereditary Duke of the disputed cities as a vassal of the Papacy.

In return the Pope offered to help not only with money but with Italian troops. Since it was now too late to take the field in the campaigning season of 1545, hostilities had to be postponed until the following spring. Meanwhile the Emperor did everything possible to conceal his plans. Acting through his Ambassador at Rome, he asked that the Council be again postponed and that when it met there should be no definitions of doctrine, but only disciplinary decrees against moral abuses. To this Paul III replied that the opening of the Council could no longer be put off. Some of the few bishops there, after so long a delay, were already leaving or threatening to leave. Further, Trent was inconvenient for most non-Germans and therefore the meeting-place should be transferred to Bologna in the papal states. The Emperor vehemently opposed changing the meeting-place, and "entreated and commanded"—an ambiguous phrase—that the Assembly confine itself to reforming clerical morals without defining doctrine.

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On December 13, 1545, the Council was solemnly opened in traditional fashion with a Mass of the Holy Spirit sung by

the presiding Legate, Cardinal Del Monte. To anticipate the future, it was to sit throughout three periods: the first until September, 1549, the second from May, 1551, to April, 1552, the third from January, 1562, to December 3, 1563.

Throughout the first two phases it was to be acted upon by a triangle of forces—the Lutherans, the Papacy and Charles.

The Lutherans' object was to maintain their recently established independence of the Papacy, to extend their confiscations of Church property and to insist that they represented an earlier and purer form of Christianity. The object of Paul III and his successor Julius III was in the first place to maintain the official Church and the Papacy in their late-medieval form by strongly anti-Lutheran definitions of doctrine, but such definitions would offend the Emperor and he might retaliate. Moral reform was even more difficult because the Popes and those of their supporters who saw the necessity for it were dealing with long-standing abuses which swelled the incomes of the host of officials of the Papal Court known as the Curia. There were more than eighty bishops on duty in Rome who were living on the endowments of bishoprics which they never visited! Since the abuses most complained of were those which flourished in Rome itself, the aged Farnese Pope—he was nearly seventy-seven—must now do something to reform his own Court. Otherwise the bishops at Trent would be tempted to reform papal officialdom themselves, and to permit that would be to admit that a Council was superior to the Papacy, an admission which from the papal point of view must be avoided at all costs.

Charles' position was even more difficult and involved. He was still trying to reconcile the Lutherans, but it was convenient for him to be able to reward political supporters by giving them rich bishoprics, as in practice he could do throughout his hereditary possessions. He and most of his subjects were personally conservative in religion. The great majority of his Spaniards, excellent soldiers and now the chief military power of Christendom, had hardly been touched by the recent debates about the Faith. Accordingly there was a limit beyond which it would be difficult for him to go in opposing the official Church. At the moment he was secretly preparing for war against the extreme Lutherans, especially

John Frederick of Saxony and Philip of Hesse who had so long opposed and humiliated him, and this in alliance with the Pope and with the politically amenable Lutherans of whom the chief was Maurice of Ducal Saxony!

Paul III had scored by calling the Council himself, and by insisting that it should meet without further delay, thus making certain that in traditional fashion the voting would be by individual bishops of whom the majority would be pro-papal Italians. There would be no voting by "Nations" as at the Council of Constance or by the lower local clergy as at Bâle, which methods might well threaten papal control of the proceedings. Nevertheless the assembled bishops might develop a spirit of independence. The Emperor or the Lutherans might put pressure upon the Council or the Pope or both. Only eighteen years before, mutinous Spanish mercenaries had joined with Lutherans in ferociously sacking Rome and shutting up a Pope in the castle of St. Angelo. No Lutherans would willingly be content with a Council like that already sitting. Finally no one could tell in advance how far the bishops from Charles' hereditary states would support him against the Pope.

The little city of Trent was an unattractive meeting-place in a narrow mountain valley on the main road from Italy up to the Brenner Pass and thence down to the Danube valley, cold in winter, blazing hot in summer and always humid thanks to the undrained marshes which bordered the mountain rivers. The town itself was medieval, untouched by the Renaissance, with narrow streets and comfortless houses. The Council met in the round-arched Romanesque cathedral of which the architecture recalled the early medieval days when the clergy had been almost worshipped throughout the West. As yet the Fathers who were to legislate for the entire papal obedience were hardly more than a handful, three Cardinal-Legates and one other Cardinal—the Bishop of Trent whose name, sometimes given in the German form Madrutz and again in the Italian form Madruzzo, symbolizes the German-Italian character of the place, four archbishops one of whom was French and twenty-one bishops, including a single German, a single Frenchman and a few Spaniards including some to whom Charles had given bishoprics in his kingdom

of Naples. The majority were pro-papalists from central and northern Italy.

Such at first was the tiny group which claimed to possess the fearful power of infallibly defining general principles of faith and morals under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a power which in one form or another had been believed throughout more than twelve centuries to inspire Ecumenical Councils. The stupendous claim of divine inspiration provoked irreverent jests. A French Ambassador present during later phases of the Council said "that the Holy Spirit came . . . from Rome daily in the courier's bag," which brought the Pope's written orders. The authority of the Council depended entirely on that of the Pope. Its sole title to represent the whole Western Church was that it had come together in answer to a general papal summons.

The Legates were alike only in their devotion to the Papacy. Del Monte, afterwards Pope Julius III whose practical wisdom we shall note in Chapter XIV in connection with Mary Tudor, was a Curial of great experience. Tall and powerfully built, he was not of noble blood and had coarse features like those of a peasant. Also he was worldly and suffered from the gout, but like Paul III he was intelligent enough to realize the need for reform. Cervini was an austere man, a learned theologian and an accomplished humanist who had been first the tutor, then the subordinate of the Pope's grandson Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. Pole did not remain long at Trent but the strictness of his life gave point to his denunciations of clerical misliving.

The first order of business was to decide as to who should vote in addition to the bishops. Del Monte ruled that the Generals of the Orders of monks and friars who were present should be allowed to do so, and that "mitred abbots" who were present—i.e. abbots of particular monasteries who were entitled to wear mitres like those of bishops, although they were not bishops—should be allowed a single collective vote. A more difficult matter was the extent to which proxy voting would be permitted. Charles had suggested to the Papal Nuncio in Spain that certain bishops from Spain and perhaps from his other hereditary possessions should be proxies for their nations. The Emperor's Viceroy in the Kingdom of



Naples had invited the Neapolitan bishops to choose four proxies. A Cardinal of the pro-Hapsburg Gonzaga family, Lords of Mantua, had suggested that the Council depose the Pope as the Council of Bâle had tried to do. A Bull of Paul III's had ruled out collective proxies which would have upset the pro-papal Italian majority as had been done at Constance, but the question of individual proxies remained. Moreover with the Devil to pay in the Germanies, German bishops might justly claim the right to be represented while detained at home by pressing business. Del Monte tactfully ruled that each individual proxy should be judged on its merits.

In order to prepare each decree before it was finally voted, preliminary discussions were arranged in which, in addition to the bishops, other theologians unable to vote later with the Fathers, were to speak.

Next came the thorny question as to whether the Council should consider points of faith or disciplinary methods or both. The "Imperialist" bishops, Charles' born subjects from Spain or Naples, vehemently urged that the Council confine itself to disciplinary reforms, maintaining that the dogmas of the Church were already written down in books, while the Pope had ordered his Legates to concentrate upon doctrine and there was the formidable precedent that nearly all previous Councils had defined points of faith.

After much angry discussion Thomas Campeggio, Bishop of Feltre in Venetian territory and brother to Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggio whose doings in England and Germany we have already noted, suggested that corrupt morals and false doctrine were so closely connected that they should be considered together. Cardinal Madruzzo, Charles' subject and devoted to his master's policy, objected but the Legates, seeing that the bishops in general were determined upon disciplinary reform, decided that half a loaf was better than no bread and accepted Campeggio's idea.

At this point the most distinguished Spanish Churchman present, Pedro Pacheco, Bishop of Jaen in Spain and an ardent "Imperialist," supported not Madruzzo but the Legates. In 1544 Charles had urged Paul III to make Pacheco a cardinal and had been so angry when the Pope

had at first refused that he had forbidden the three Spanish bishops who had been first promoted to wear their cardinal's robes in public. Now, however, late in January, 1546, the Bishop of Jaen must have known that he had been made a cardinal in mid-December. His attitude was decisive, and the Council voted to consider both doctrine and discipline. Paul III consented but ordered that doctrine must come first.

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This, though apparently not much noticed at the time, was a decisive papal victory over the Imperialists because any anti-Lutheran theological definition must be contrary to the Emperor's wishes, whereas the Pope agreed that moral reform was needed—so long as the assembled bishops did not try to reform him and his Court.

Another hotly debated subject was the title of the Council, now increased in numbers through the arrival of five more bishops. So far it had been called "The most Holy Council of Trent, legitimately called together in the Holy Spirit," but now the assembled Fathers, although most of them were individually insignificant Italians, were beginning to show a corporate independence which might turn anti-papal. Nine of them, including two archbishops, formally asked that the words "Representing the Universal Church" should be added, and apparently most of those present would have preferred the addition. The Legates, fearing that this might imply the superiority of Councils to Popes as asserted by the Councils of Constance and Bâle, opposed it, and were successful when they were joined by Seripando the General of the Augustinian Hermits.

Nevertheless Paul III and the Legates may have feared Seripando's influence, for he was known to hold the doctrine of Double Justification approved by Contarini at Ratisbon but allegedly suspected as leaning toward Lutheranism. At all events it was decided to strengthen the papal party at Trent on the theological side, and two of the earliest Jesuits, Laynez and Salmeron, were ordered to report there as papal theologians.

Late in February word came that Luther was dead. Since

he was still the great figure-head of religious revolt, all at Trent breathed more freely.

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The great happiness of the Miner's Son's later life had been his marriage. During a short absence from his wife a little before his death he had written to her in a touching letter: "I send you my poor, weak, infirm old love."

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In April the Council passed its first theological Decree, defining that not only Holy Scripture but also oral traditions originating in words of Our Lord not recorded in the Gospels, and other traditions dictated by the Holy Spirit and preserved in the Church by the apostolic succession were authoritative. Of course this did not mean that all traditions are necessarily apostolic and authoritative. The Decree accepted all the Books of the Latin Vulgate Bible and said that they contained no errors in faith or morals. It also condemned certain Lutheran propositions, especially that the Bible contains everything necessary for salvation, that it is impious to put tradition on a par with the inspired Word of God and that the meaning of the Bible is plain and can be understood without commentary by individual believers who will be inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Since so many people today object to defined dogmas, it may be well to note that without definitions there would be no way for any religious body to ensure within itself the unity of faith so passionately desired by the early Christians, and that the definitions only make explicit what was already implicit—though perhaps not explicit—in the Church's Faith. The dogmatic decrees were not intended to make matters difficult for Protestants. Trent's decision as to tradition can also be defended on the ground that only a very small part of the words spoken by Our Lord during the three years of His public ministry have been preserved in the Gospels. Originally there must have been a mass of true oral tradition as well. Accordingly non-Scriptural traditions may be true, and their truth or untruth must be decided by our

understanding of what we mean by the Church. In other words, to whom was Our Lord's promise of the continuing Holy Spirit given?

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Charles V objected to the Council's Decree on the Bible and tradition because it was anti-Lutheran and therefore contrary to his policy of conciliation. Although the number of Cardinals at Trent had risen to five with the promotion of Pacheco, and the number of other archbishops and bishops to thirty-two, even with these additions the Council was still almost ludicrously small. Moreover, said the Emperor, not one first-rate theologian was present. Nevertheless his protest was mild. After all, as he well knew, the Church had existed in her fullness before a line of the New Testament had been written. Nor had she ever depended upon divinely inspired documents alone, no matter how precious. For her they were only a part of her divine authority to teach. On the other hand the pro-papalists were delighted. A doctrine had been defined without mention of moral reform! Paul III went so far as to suggest allowing the Fathers to call themselves representatives of the Universal Church as long as they added the words "through or by means of the Supreme Pontiff."

Meanwhile an incident had shown that the Council was by no means a mere tool of the Roman Court. The Curia was accustomed from time to time to command individual bishops to pay pensions to one or other of its favorites out of the bishop's own revenues, and one of the poorer bishops present at Trent on being summoned to pay had not paid. He now produced a Vatican order threatening to excommunicate him unless he immediately did so, whereat his brother bishops unanimously rose in his defense and compelled the Pope's officials to apologize humbly and promise redress.

In May, 1546, Laynez and Salmeron reached Trent. Since some of the other theologians present were "not entirely sound" in the eyes of papalists, Cervini proposed that Salmeron should begin every preliminary discussion and that Laynez should sum up after all others had spoken in order to refute any errors which might have been made. For the moment, however, the activities of the two Jesuits were



chiefly charitable with a humorous turn. Although the raggedness of their clothes offended certain other Spaniards who were present and must have contrasted strongly with the neatness characteristic of Jesuit dress today, they began to beg throughout the town for clothes to give to the professional local beggars. After seventy-six of these had been clothed, the Jesuits found that a number of their beneficiaries were gambling away the garments which had been given them, and therefore gave the improvident wretches only a single garment which could not be gambled away without reducing the gambler to complete nakedness.

In June another dogmatic point, that of original sin, was defined in spite of Imperialist opposition, although during the preliminary discussions the Imperialist party had been strengthened by the arrival of twelve Spanish bishops including the Archbishop of Toledo. Besides being Charles' subjects, the Spanish clergy warmly supported disciplinary reform because they themselves, thanks largely to the strict rule of Ximenes, were freer from moral abuses than those of any other nation in Europe. His Grace of Toledo supported by Mendoza hotly urged the Legates to suspend dogmatic definitions and take up reform, producing an order from the Emperor to that effect. The Legates produced a counter-order from the Pope, and at last all agreed to follow Thomas Campeggio's compromise, i.e. that decisions on doctrine and on reform should be simultaneous.

Thus the Imperialists, although unable to have decisions of doctrine laid aside, were able to have the Decree on original sin accompanied by a sweeping Decree on disciplinary reform, the teaching of Holy Scripture, the provision of grammar schools for ignorant clerics and for poor scholars, the duty of preaching both for the bishops and other clergy, and the duty of all monks to get the approval of their local bishop before preaching at all. The same Decree provided—twenty-nine years after Luther's first protest!—that the Indulgence preachers who had often become Indulgence-sellers were strictly forbidden to preach.

The slow but steady increase in the size of the Council's numbers continued, raising the number of bishops and archbishops who voted the foregoing decrees to fifty-eight.

Presently, however, political events began to affect the Council's doings.

Only in June, 1546, when it began to appear that John Frederick of Saxony and Philip of Hesse—the latter in spite of his agreement of 1541 with Charles—might be preparing to attack, the Emperor definitely committed himself both to the Pope and to Maurice of Ducal Saxony. To Paul III Madruzzo represented the coming war as an anti-Lutheran crusade, while Granvelle told Maurice that the Emperor intended to break with the Council which was acting as a mere papal tool. Charles, the Chancellor said, would invite all Christians to a General Council so inclusive that the Pope would have to submit to its authority. A treaty guaranteed the benevolent neutrality of the Duke of strategically important Bavaria in return for an Imperial promise to make the latter Elector Palatine in case the present Elector fought against his overlord. The weak side of the scheme was its duplicity.

Remembering how drunken Lutheran Princes and their foul-mouthed preachers had so often insulted himself and his religion, Charles was glad to make war. Although he was suffering acutely from gout, with his high spirit and willingness to face hardship and danger he was able to keep his army in being in the presence of enemies who outnumbered him during the usual campaigning season. Next when the rebel forces began to disperse he accomplished the remarkable feat of keeping a Sixteenth Century army in the field through a hard winter without putting it into winter quarters. Meanwhile he raged against the papal policy at Trent which was increasing his German difficulties, storming at the Legate who was with the army and forbidding him to have his great processional cross carried before him in public.

Nevertheless, during the later months of 1546 while the Emperor was gaining ground in the southern Germanies the Legates at Trent, theologically reinforced by Laynez and Salmeron, kept steadily working at a Decree concerning the doctrine of Justification. No previous Council had defined how sinful mankind can be saved, and now Luther's idea of Justification by faith alone had become the center of Lutheran teaching. The problem thus forced upon Western theologians

was enough to excite anyone who believed in the Church as a divine society with the duty of defining religious truth. Political passion was added to theological passion so that feeling ran high. There was talk of transferring the Council to Italy for fear of Protestant attack, although the transfer would certainly anger the Emperor still more. Cardinals Pacheco and Madruzzo, both Imperialists and the latter the Bishop of Trent and therefore influential there, insulted Del Monte by telling him to his face that he was not nobly born. A Neapolitan bishop, theologically furious at the slurring remarks of a Greek bishop from the Venetian-owned Aegean Islands, seized the latter by the beard and pulled out several hairs. Although these personal quarrels were smoothed over by edifying reconciliations, everyone knew that another turning-point was approaching. Seripando ably and vehemently defended the conciliatory doctrine of "Double Justification." Pole had left Trent for Padua but from there he kept writing to the Augustinian General in the same sense.

Presently, however, preliminary votes showed that the Council's Decree would be a flat contradiction of the Lutheran position. For centuries Christians had believed that Justification must combine faith and works, and that if man had no power to resist or cooperate with Divine Grace then he would not be a moral being. Moreover Luther's idea that individuals can be certain of salvation once for all seems to contradict the notorious fact that anyone may fall and may or may not rise to Grace again. In the trial of Joan of Arc when that unlettered peasant girl had been asked whether she believed herself to be in a state of Grace, her answer, "If I am I pray God to keep me in it, and if I am not I pray Him to bring me to it," had been a model of orthodoxy. Nevertheless, an anti-Lutheran Decree would be both theologically and politically a declaration of war. The bishops of Charles' party led by Pacheco, tried but failed to prevent the passing of such a Decree.

Perhaps some of the Imperialists found themselves theologically on the other side almost in spite of themselves. At all events, just before mid-January, 1547, a strongly anti-Lutheran Decree on Justification was passed, some

of it in Laynez' own words, but out of seventy-seven votes thirty-nine—a majority of one—were cast with stipulated "reservations." Charles forbade his ambassadors to witness the voting and afterwards succeeded in postponing the publication of the Decree, so there for the moment the matter rested. It was not yet clear whether in the long run the Council would obey the Pope or the Emperor.

The Decree on Justification was accompanied by a Re-forming Decree on the duty of bishops to reside in their dioceses, but this was phrased in terms so vague as not to touch the heart of the problem.

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In February, 1547, word reached Trent that Henry VIII was dead. A few months after having had Catherine Howard killed he had married a sixth wife Catherine Parr, a kindly widow who had already buried two elderly husbands. To him she was hardly more than a nurse who soothed him, flattered him and cared for his growing infirmities. Fatter than ever, he now had syphilitic ulcers on his legs.

His remaining energies went into politics in which he was successful. Although he is sometimes represented as a tyrant, in England he remained popular. Indeed to this day he is warmly remembered as "Bluff King Hal" in certain popular ballads which are still occasionally sung, for instant one which begins:

The hunt is up, the hunt is up, and it is  
well nigh day.  
And Harry our King is gone hunting, to bring  
his deer away,  
To bring his deer away.

—one can almost hear the hunting horn.

Since his continental fellow-sovereigns were as determined as he to allow no Pope to dictate their policies, no serious papal threat to him appeared. In 1545 after Charles, who had made an alliance with him against Francis, had made a separate peace without consulting his English partner, the French attempted an invasion and occupied the Isle of Wight but after indecisive naval activity in the Channel they retired.



In Scotland the Royal Theologian was at least able to encourage faction fights among the nobles there.

Thus his last years were not seriously disturbed. He had the Litany sung in an English version by Cranmer, a splendid piece of prose most of which remains in the Anglican Prayer Book. On the other hand, he himself devoutly continued to hear two Latin Masses daily as he had done all his life.

Both he and his archbishop who are usually remembered as makers of the coming era may be better understood if we remember that each, in his own way, was also typical of the Middle Ages in their decline. As we saw in Chapter II, that decline formalized religion and bred a luxuriant crop of prominent men as amazing as Henry; the superstitious and cruel Henry V of England, Louis XI of France with his strange devotion to images, the "Catholic King" Ferdinand of Aragon who was also a past master of cynical villainy, Charles V's grandfather the wildly eccentric Maximilian and a long list of highly placed Italian scoundrels. The Royal Theologian's peculiar conscience seems less exceptional when we look at these contemporaries or near-contemporaries of his.

Cranmer who puzzles us almost as much as the Master whom he adored was the intellectual descendant of a long line of decadent scholastics who had yielded to the permanent temptation of men too fond of formal logic and precise definitions, which is to juggle with terms instead of honestly pursuing truth. In poetry the amazing late-medieval skill in using words has left us admirable short poems, including those of Villon in which the elaborate rhymes seem inevitable, but in philosophy and theology a somewhat similar verbal dexterity had deplorable results. Skill in debating both sides of so many questions caused horrid doubts as to how many debatable truths could really be true.

Like all the other reforming leaders the Archbishop was emphatically no saint. He was the First Churchman in a legal system which burned people who publicly proclaimed religious beliefs which he privately held and was accustomed to defend as "hypotheses" in private with the King. Worse still, the Archbishop deliberately deceived a number of Henry's prospective victims, including Anne Boleyn who had been in a sense his patroness. During her imprisonment he

lied to her in order to get information which might help to justify her death.

On the other hand Cranmer's near-sighted eyes were continually fastened upon learned books in a genuine love of scholarship. Whenever his master asked for a summary of opinions on any theological point, he would promptly make a neat digest of what the Fathers and Schoolmen had said about the matter. In an age of greed he was indifferent to wealth and would undoubtedly have said that the Church might be the better for being less rich. His one modest extravagance was on his private library which had two Hebrew Bibles, almost all the works of the Greek and Latin Fathers and of the chief Reformers, including Erasmus, Zwingli, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, etc. Best of all, he was conspicuously humble with a truly Christian readiness to forgive personal injuries. As to smaller matters, most archbishops then insisted on the utmost deference from inferiors; Wolsey's attendants, for instance, had to kneel when waiting on him at the table but Cranmer preferred simpler manners. As to forgiveness of injuries, Shakespeare may have been following a true tradition when he made Henry VIII say:

The common voice, I see, is verified

Of thee, which says thus: Do my Lord of Canterbury

A shrewd turn, and he is your friend forever.

The reign ended on the same note as it had begun thirty years before. On Christmas Eve, 1545, Henry's last appearance before Parliament was a notable success. He thanked his people for their love and loyalty. Indeed the Members had been generous to him, for they had just empowered him to confiscate the funds which had been given to endow "Chantries," i.e. priests whose only duty was to say Masses for the repose of the soul of the giver. He continued: "Since I find such kindness in your part toward me, I cannot choose but love . . . you; affirming that no Prince in the world more favoreth his subjects than I do you; nor no subjects . . . more love or obey their Sovereign Lord than I perceive you do; for whose defence my treasure shall not be hidden, nor (if need be) my person shall not be unadventured." Here the bulky, aging monarch, who could not have usefully "ventured" his

enormous person in war, was overcome by emotion and wept. He next preached a little sermon on charity between those of different religious opinions, until his audience wept with him.

He then threw in a joke which must have been familiar to his hearers. In the Latin Mass immediately after the Communion there is a prayer which begins "Quod ore sumpsimus, Domine, pura mente capiamus—what we have received with the mouth, let us take, Lord, with a pure heart." In some provincial Abbey or Cathedral a copyist's error had changed "sumpsimus" which means "received" into "mumpsimus" which means nothing. But when someone tried to correct the error those who had always said "mumpsimus" insisted on still saying it! The Royal Theologian gently urged that there ought to be no wrangling between old "mumpsimus" and new "sumpsimus." His whole performance was most affectionate and edifying.

Behind the scenes, however, the religious and political pendulum was beginning to quiver uneasily in a struggle as to who was to have power after he should be gone. On one side were the Howards and Gardiner, the representatives of social and religious conservatism. On the other were the Seymour brothers, little Edward's uncles who had bounded upwards in the social scale since Henry had married their sister Jane. The Seymours won, thanks in part to certain indiscretions of Norfolk's son Lord Surrey. Within a year of Henry's fatherly speech the failing King had Surrey beheaded, and shut up the faithful old Duke himself under sentence of death on a monstrous charge of treason.

Before the end of 1546 Henry began to feel his end close upon him. He was only fifty-five, but his syphilis had increased and he was now so fat and helpless that it took four men to lift him out of bed. His obedient Parliament having authorized him to fix the succession by Will, he settled it upon Edward, then—if the little boy should die childless—upon Mary, if she too were without heirs then upon Elizabeth, last upon more remote heirs. He named a Council of Sixteen to rule until nine-year-old Edward should be sixteen. Cranmer's name came first but, since the Archbishop was known to care nothing for political power, clearly others

would govern, chiefly the two Seymours and an ally of theirs named John Dudley. Significantly enough, Gardiner was not named. All sixteen were to be equal; no one of them was to be superior to the others.

For the last time the dying King received the Sacrament. When told that it would be enough if he sat up to do so and that if he tried to kneel it might kill him, he answered that he would rather die than show disrespect to the Consecrated Wafer in which he devoutly believed Our Lord to be fully present. Hoisted up, he knelt in his bed. At the very end he sent for Cranmer who came from one of his manors, riding hard, for he was a good horseman. When the Archbishop entered the room Henry was past speech, but when the mild king-worshipper pressed his master's hand and begged him to make a sign that he died in the Faith he said that the royal hand pressed his in return.

Henry died on January 28, 1547. Francis of France outlived him by only two months. Luther had died about a year before. Of the leaders of the first Revolutionary generation only the Emperor Charles and Calvin, neither of them yet fifty years old, were still active but both were already weakened in body. New actors were about to take the stage.

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In February, 1547, the month after Henry VIII's death, there was an open quarrel between Charles and the Pope. The inconsistencies of the Emperor's policy were beginning to appear since he had not abolished the new forms of worship in the Protestant German towns which had surrendered to him. Also Paul III had promised papal troops only for six months. To Charles, however, this withdrawal of support in the midst of a war which he was fighting against the chief Lutherans, the Saxon Elector and Philip of Hesse, was rank treachery. The aged Farnese Pope made matters worse by ineptly suggesting that the Emperor should join with the latter's enemy Francis I and conquer England where Henry VIII had just died. The usually self-controlled Hapsburg now threw aside all verbal restraint. "That villain Pope," was the least of his comments to any papal agent who came near him. Once he said to the Nuncio: "I'll put you in



the front rank so that you may learn what Rome gains by her affectations and benedictions." Apparently it was not yet known that Francis was dying.

Both the Vatican and the pro-papal party at Trent began to be frightened at Charles' anger, but Del Monte kept the Council to its work. Strangely enough, in March the latter managed to have the Decree of Justification again passed, this time unanimously and without reservations.

This was a turning-point. Thenceforward, unless the Council should reverse itself, the Papacy and not the Emperor would control it.

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The theological essence of the Decree on justification is shown by noting six of its thirty-three "Canons." The first three insist that man by his own free will and without the help of Divine Grace cannot satisfy God's justice. The fourth says: "Should anyone say that human free will moved and stimulated by God, does not cooperate by assenting to God who stimulates it and calls it forth, by which it prepares and disposes itself to obtain justifying grace, and that it cannot refuse consent if it wishes to do so, but like a lifeless thing is absolutely inert and plays a purely passive part, let him who says this be anathema." The eleventh says: "Should anyone say that men are justified either by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ"—i.e. without moral effort on their part—"or by the sole remission of their sins without reference to the grace and charity put into their hearts by the Holy Spirit...let him be anathema." The twenty-fourth says: "Should anyone say that righteousness when received"—i.e. by grace—"is not preserved and also increased by good works, but that the works are only the fruits and signs of the justification obtained and not also the cause of its increase, let him be anathema." The Pope and the Council had now taken up a position from which they could hardly return.

Another doctrinal Decree reproving various errors concerning the Sacraments in general was next voted, much of it closely following the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas and only changing his simple Latin style into a more ornate Renaissance form. At the same time a Reforming Decree against

"Pluralities," i.e. the holding of more than one benefice by any of the clergy, was also passed. Certain bishops had wished specifically to mention the College of Cardinals who were indeed the chief offenders in the matter, but Paul III, undoubtedly informed in advance that some such prohibition would be voted if he himself did not act promptly, had just previously forbidden all cardinals in future to lend themselves to this shocking abuse.

Next an obscure incident happened which is still disputed. A bishop died suddenly from a disfiguring disease, and it was feared that this meant the beginning of one of the outbreaks of plague then so common. The physicians of the Council, summoned by Del Monte, said that a local epidemic was indeed threatened. The senior Legate then announced that he would leave the Council free to decide whether to remain at Trent or to go elsewhere. Pacheco said that he doubted whether the disease was plague. Probably he knew that Paul III had been secretly trying to have the assembled bishops move to some city where they would be more under papal control, and certainly such a displacement would be a breach of the Emperor's promise to the Germans. Nevertheless a considerable majority of the Council voted to adjourn to Bologna in the Papal States. Fifty-five bishops and most if not all of the theologians of lower rank left Trent for Bologna while fourteen bishops led by the Spanish Cardinal remained. To anticipate events, the alarm of plague proved to be false.

Charles learned of the move to Bologna just as the crisis of his German campaign was approaching, and also learned that Paul III was negotiating with the French. He said to the Legate who was with the army: "Young men may perhaps be excused for catching the 'French Disease' but not old men." The Pope was now seventy-nine and the "French disease" was now the name for syphilis!

The Emperor was able to attempt a decisive stroke against Electoral Saxony thanks to a diversion made by Duke Maurice whom he had bribed with the promise of great rewards. Pale and thin as a skeleton from his gout but at the head of thirty thousand good troops and riding steadily with his leading units, he was able to surprise John Frederick who had posted himself with about half as many men, including a number of

raw recruits, behind the broad and shallow Elbe. Only a few Saxons escaped. John Frederick himself, deeply cut across the forehead, was harshly received by Charles when brought in as a prisoner. On returning to camp Charles said: "Get supper ready. I have been hunting all day and have caught the pig, and very fat he is."

Having perhaps learned from his experience with Francis I, he was moderate in victory. He gave the title of Saxon Elector and most of John Frederick's land to Maurice but spared his prisoner's life. When someone suggested that Luther's body should be dug up and burned for heresy the victor answered. "I do not make war on the dead." Nor did he molest the Miner's Son's widow. Philip of Hesse came in and tamely gave himself up, leaving only the important city of Magdeburg and certain Baltic districts still in rebellion.

After garrisoning several German cities with Spanish troops Charles protested against the transfer of the Council and demanded that the bishops return to Trent, while the Pope and Del Monte alike asserted the independence of the Church in general and of the Council in particular. Meanwhile the Pope's bastard Pierluigi, whom he had made hereditary Lord of Parma and Piacenza as a vassal of the Papacy, was assassinated and Piacenza was seized for the Empire. Paul III, after trying in vain to find allies against Charles, temporarily forbade the passing of any decrees at Bologna but left the future of the Council to the bishops there. Since the Imperialist bishops at Trent refused to move, in September, 1549, the Pope suspended the Council.

Meanwhile Charles attempted still another local and temporary solution of the German religious quarrel, this time by means of the so-called "Interim." His proposals, of which the chief author seems to have been Pflug, were traditionally Catholic in doctrine, although Purgatory was not mentioned and the article on Justification was to some extent inspired by the idea of "Double Justification," now thoroughly discredited at Rome. The chief novelties were the concessions of priestly marriage and the Communion Cup to the laity. At Rome the Emperor's political position was judged to be so strong that it was decided to confirm the "Interim" although that measure had been put through quite

independently of papal authority. The only Roman reservation was that priestly marriage and the lay Chalice were to be granted only by local and personal dispensations. In the Germanies on the other hand all parties so opposed Charles' scheme that it soon became a dead letter. The Pope did not have to extinguish it.

To us who know what was about to happen it is clear that now the Emperor's persistent attempts at reconciling the Lutherans were hopeless. The people of the time, however, were like spectators watching a play for the first time when the stage is momentarily vacant or in darkness and the audience does not know what is to come. Charles himself would make one more effort.

Paul III died in November, 1549, at the age of eighty-one. On his deathbed he gave the disputed Duchy of Parma to his grandson, Ottavio Farnese.

The late Pope's tomb in St. Peter's, designed by Michaelangelo, was originally ornamented by a statue of a nude woman representing "justice" which was said to have been a portrait of the Pope's beautiful sister as she had appeared in youth when her intimacy with the Borgia Pope Alexander VI was believed to have been the reason for her brother's promotion to cardinal. Later in the stricter time of the Counter-Reformation the nude figure was partly covered with bronze drapery.

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Paul III's death was followed by a long and scandalous papal election lasting more than two months and chiefly concerned with whether the next Pope would favor the Hapsburgs or the House of France. At last Del Monte's name was suddenly brought forward as one on whom all factions could unite. In American Convention parlance he was elected as a "dark horse" candidate.

The new Pope took the title of Julius III. As we have seen, his appearance and manners were vulgar. After his election he indulged a fancy for questionable entertainments. Also he gave scandal by making a cardinal of an obscure but extremely handsome young man of seventeen who had long been a member of his household and wholly lacked merit.



The *Catholic Encyclopedia* notes that there were "very disagreeable rumors" about his relations with this unworthy favorite. At the same time, however, he put no obstacle in the way of the reform of the Roman clergy. Some progress was made in reforming the financial scandals of the Roman Court, in which matter Julius' knowledge of the Canon Law must have told heavily. Under St. Ignatius Loyola's influence he helped to found the German College at Rome for work in the Germanies where the number of candidates for ordination had greatly fallen off.

Julius began at once to plan for reassembling the Council of Trent. With the same practical wisdom which he later showed when reconciling England to Rome he did his best to make his intention agreeable both to the Emperor and to the French king. At once, however, he ran into the old political rivalries. Charles made no difficulties. Oddly enough, when publicly consenting to the bishops' return to Trent he recorded a formal but secret protest such as his own son Philip II of Spain was to make later when dealing with the Dutch rebels and such as Cranmer had made nineteen years before when swearing fidelity to the Pope! On this occasion Charles secretly but expressly stipulated that his previous denial of the legality of the transfer to Bologna should not be affected. He still clung to his cherished hope of doing something with the Lutherans by means of the Council. They on their side kept insisting that all the decisions made at Trent in Paul III's time must be reopened for further discussion.

The French, however, would not send their bishops to Trent. Moreover there arose one of the many trivial accidents which have so often affected history. Julius had confirmed Paul III's deathbed gift to Ottavio Farnese of the hereditary lordship of Parma as a vassal of the Papal States. Ottavio, however, was frightened when Charles continued to insist that Parma was a dependency not of the Pope but of the Empire, and very reasonably doubted whether Julius had either the will or the power to protect him. In the early spring of 1551, when the Council had already been summoned to meet on May 1, he allied himself with Henry II of France, Francis I's heir, and presently received French troops. Julius

hated the idea of war but felt that he must reduce his rebellious vassal and consequently must appeal to Charles for soldiers. Charles consented, thus creating the strange situation that the two powers who claimed the overlordship of Parma against each other were banded together against its occupant. The campaign dragged, but made the North Italian roads unsafe and thus put an end to all hope of having French bishops at Trent. Some of Henry's advisers even talked of proclaiming the French Church independent of the Papacy, as Francis I had talked of doing thirty years before. This extreme step was not taken but the young King stopped all remittances of money from France to Rome.

Nevertheless the Pope insisted on reopening the Council on May 1, 1551, and reopened it was. Its President was the Cardinal Legate Crescenzi, a Roman and like Julius a Canon lawyer. He had been made a cardinal in 1542 although there had been opposition to his promotion because of his scandalous conduct. He had a bastard daughter, but had amended his life and had joined the party of disciplinary reform.

Although no Decrees had been passed at Bologna, a good deal of preparatory theological work on the sacraments had been done, so that under happier political circumstances the Council might have gone ahead rapidly. Julius III had the utmost difficulty in persuading even those bishops who were in Rome to attend. When he called eighty-four of them before him and ordered them to start for Trent, nearly all found good reasons for postponing their journey. At the opening session, besides Crescenzi, two other Legates and Madruzzo, there were only four archbishops and ten bishops, six of the latter Spaniards. One reason for the small attendance was the scarcity of tolerable accommodations. Even self-sacrificing men like Laynez and Salmeron wrote soberly but bitterly to their General that notwithstanding their quality of papal theologians, they had been lodged in a room where it was physically impossible to read, write or confer with anyone for want of the most necessary furniture. Even after four months, besides the cardinals there were still only five other archbishops and twenty-six bishops present.

Nevertheless in September discussions on the Eucharist

were resumed. The two Jesuits again took a leading part. Early in October, the number of bishops having risen to thirty-four, a Decree on the Eucharist was passed, maintaining the full medieval doctrine and practice. Once more the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas was followed—interestingly enough he had anticipated most of the subsequent objections of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin. The thinly attended Council also voted a disciplinary Decree on the jurisdiction of bishops and on the vexed question of appeals in the Church Courts. These pronouncements were followed by Decrees on the sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction and by a reforming Decree on the behavior of the clergy and on the authority of bishops.

In October representatives of the South German Protestant States began to appear, and in January, 1552, they were followed by a Saxon delegation led by Leopold Badhorn the Chancellor of the Elector Maurice, now the most powerful of the German local Princes. At last Charles' dream of an assembly of all parties to the religious quarrel seemed to be coming true. In fact, too much water had gone over the dam since the Miner's Son had set the river on fire in 1517. Babies born in that year were now men of thirty-four.

Meanwhile Maurice had been planning to attack his Hapsburg benefactor. The new Elector's cooperation with the Emperor who stood for religious conservatism and his supplanting of his cousin John Frederick were disliked by the other Lutherans, and Charles' position had been weakened by the haughty and avaricious conduct of his Spanish garrisons in the Germanies. Also the Emperor had deeply offended Ferdinand by trying once more to arrange to have his own son Philip succeed the latter in the Empire, although Philip had made himself unpopular during a tour through the Germanies. The young Prince was reserved and cold, hating beer and without a spark of the soldierly dash which had made his father popular there.

Maurice planned to strike suddenly. He was secretly in touch with Henry II of France, and at the same time he obtained from the Emperor the command of the Imperial army on the pretext of reducing the considerable Lutheran city of Magdeburg which was in revolt against the Interim.

After attaching the unit commanders of his troops to himself, late in 1551 he was still loudly asserting loyalty to Charles.

Badhorn was of course in the secret, and at Trent he played a part in his master's scheme. To take an uncompromising position there would strengthen Maurice's position with the other Lutherans and would end all hope for the Emperor's policy of religious unity. Accordingly he began by paying no visit to the Papal Legates. He then asked the Council for a special safe-conduct for the Saxon theologians who were expected, and followed this up with a piece of play-acting. He insisted upon the familiar Lutheran conditions for a "Free" Council. Nothing was to be decided at Trent until the Saxon theologians should have appeared. Previous decisions should then be reopened. All members of the Council including the cardinals should be freed from their oaths to the Pope. The Decrees of the Councils of Constance and Bâle on the superiority of General Councils to Popes should again be proclaimed. Now this last idea was held by some of the bishops present. It was that of the so-called Gallican party in the Western Church and was still a permitted opinion. However, Badhorn must have known that the Council would never swallow his program.

Momentarily certain agents of the Duke of Württemberg then took the lead for the Protestant side, presenting various documents which according to Crescenzi contained such discourtesies that he refused to read them publicly. He would do so only to the Council sitting in a secret General Congregation—a man of today might say: "to the members in Executive Session sitting as a Committee of the Whole."

Next January 24, 1552, after a ceremonious opening Badhorn told the assembled bishops that they had no real religion but only an outward show of one. The wickedness of the Popes and their Court, he continued, had so destroyed the ancient dignity of the Roman Church that no one should respect or obey papal authority. This and much more of the same sort was heard without comment, for Julius III had directed that every indulgence should be shown to the Lutherans as long as no dogmatic or disciplinary point was yielded. The Council even voted to postpone until after the expected arrival of the Saxon theologians the publication of



certain Decrees which had been prepared for final passage in a Session to be held on March 19. No Saxon theologians appeared. Badhorn's whole performance had been intended only to gain time.

Meanwhile Crescenzi began to lose control of the Council. When in answer to Badhorn he tried to have the bishops vote that the Pope was superior to any Council they refused. Accordingly opinion at Rome began to consider suspending the assembly, the more since the small war in North Italy showed no sign of reaching a decision.

One wonders why in the early spring of 1552 Charles was so blind to Maurice's treachery. Absorbed in his plans for Philip and more and more weakened by gout, the Emperor remained at Innsbruck in order to be near the Council. He had few troops at hand, and would not listen to repeated warnings of his danger.

Early in April Henry II and Maurice moved. Just beyond what was then the north-eastern French border were three French-speaking cities which had always belonged to the Empire: Metz, Toul and Verdun. Maurice had secretly bargained with the King of France that the latter should occupy them—under the thin pretence that he would do so as "Vicar of the Empire." Henry took all three without serious resistance. With French money, Maurice and his German confederates raised an army of twenty-five thousand men, mobilized at Erfurt and moved first on Augsburg and then on Innsbruck. The Emperor was only just able to get away in time and was carried southward across the Brenner Pass in a litter.

Some weeks before, the Pope had ordered the Council suspended, and this had been voted at Trent on April 28. Notwithstanding Maurice's approach, the departure was orderly, the Legates, like the Captain of a sinking ship, being the last to go. The Assembly which was so deeply to affect the future was temporarily snuffed out as a mere incident of an almost bloodless war.

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With the second departure from Trent there disappeared the last remnant of Charles' hope of using the Council as a

means to religious unity. He never again achieved the position which Mühlberg had given him.

Instead of pursuing the fugitive Emperor, Maurice began to negotiate with him through Ferdinand—Sixteenth Century statesmen, chronically short of money, usually thought of a war between Christians as a means toward negotiating successfully with a defeated opponent who had by no means been knocked out. The rebellious Elector himself said that he had no cage big enough for so large a bird, and presently there was still another of the temporary agreements which had so often failed to halt the advance of Lutheranism, this time known as the Peace of Passau.

Charles threw his last energies into the struggle against encroaching France. From October to December, 1552, he besieged Metz but the place was vigorously defended and finally the Emperor found himself compelled to retreat.

## *XIV. England and the End at Trent*

FOR six years after Henry VIII's death in 1547 English affairs hardly affected those of the continent.

During those years Henry was followed by the nominal reign of his sickly son Edward VI who was only nine when crowned. Brought up by his step-mother Catherine Parr, he had become precociously enthusiastic for innovating religious ideas more radical than those of his father. Aside from this he was a mere puppet.

Those who actually governed were his uncle Edward Seymour who presently made himself Duke of Somerset and John Dudley who was first made Earl of Warwick and afterwards made himself Duke of Northumberland. There was also Thomas Seymour, Edward's younger brother. This triumvirate and the lesser lay-politicians who followed one or another of them were out for power, titles and riches, especially riches which lay ready to their hands in the shape of the confiscated Abbey lands much of which were still in possession of the Crown. In religious matters the leading figure was Cranmer who, whatever we think of his shifting ideas, was in this time of his life free to be sincere. Since he had no political ambition and had long been secretly for more radical religious innovations than those of Henry, his wishes accorded perfectly with the desires of the lay-politicians to go on looting the former Abbey lands. Religious or financial conservation in any form would at least have slowed down their grafting. Also there was now a "hard core" of sincere and even fanatical religious innovators. In opposition to Cranmer the chief man was Gardiner who continued to stand for the anti-papal Catholicism of Henry.

The first big scene of the reign was played by Cranmer when he crowned the child who was Supreme Head of the Church in England—at nine years and three months old!

Cranmer sang the coronation Mass in the Latin form universal in England for nearly a thousand years. Incidentally, however, the Archbishop had long and secretly detested that service as idolatrous. Then as now the crowning of an English sovereign was a splendid show. Probably most of those present remembered chiefly the pageantry, the blazing candles, the gorgeous colors of the robes, the frail boy's splendid crown, the peers' coronets, the organ, the shouts acclaiming the new monarch and the trumpet blasts blown from the Church roof.

There may have been, however, a notable innovation in the ceremony. Previous coronations had begun by having the King promise to observe the liberties, laws and customs of England and by having him cheered by those present as a sign that they desired him for their ruler, all of which had come before the declaration of sovereignty. Now the declaration of sovereignty may have come first, followed by the acclamation of the new King and then by an address from Cranmer. The crowned child, so the Archbishop may have said, had no earthly superior. His authority came to him directly from God, so that no Pope nor anyone else could lawfully take it from him.

The idea underlying this had already been set forth by Machiavelli. It is that those who govern are bound by no law except that of force and fraud when dealing with other governments. Our medieval ancestors thought of Christendom as one country; their only deeply felt division was between Christian and non-Christian men. How far we have departed from any common code of morals can be judged by recalling the dates, 1914-18 and 1939-45, and by noting the threat of World War III. In the acid phrase of Irving Babbitt, Machiavelli has proved to be the most "forward looking" man who ever lived.

After Edward VI's coronation the Council were slow to move in religious matters. Indeed their hesitation was long enough to encourage Pole to write to Somerset—who had been named "Protector"—with a view to England's return to papal obedience, but without result. Presently, the Protector's tolerance of certain cases of image-smashing showed that more radical religious steps might follow.



As Seymour and his advisers saw the situation, two points must have stood out. In the first place the Papacy had long been unpopular, partly because of papal taxation. Even in the Pilgrimage of Grace the pro-papal rebels had urged that this taxation be drastically reduced. On the other hand, churchgoers have usually associated religion with the form of service to which they are accustomed, all the more when this has come down to them from an immemorial past. Throughout the West this meant the Latin Mass to which most Englishmen were attached. Secondly, the politicians probably judged that activity and zeal were chiefly on the side of the innovating minority. Indeed in the early stages of revolutions the conservatives are usually slow to move.

Meanwhile, we may momentarily turn from religion to note the personal behavior of those politicians. In London Somerset was building a splendid palace called Somerset House, conservatives thought sacrilegiously, for he was taking his materials from one of the cloisters of St. Paul's Cathedral and from a London parish church, both of which had been pulled down for this express purpose.

Thomas Seymour was going even further; indeed he is so perfect an example of the license of the time that we may anticipate events in order to follow his short and erratic career. Hardly had his brother Somerset become Lord Protector, i.e. practically King for the time being, before Thomas—now Lord High Admiral—began intriguing against him. Besides making friends with certain pirates and trying to corrupt the Master of one of the official Mints in order to raise money for a private army of his own, he tried to marry Princess Elizabeth—he may not have known that she was internally deformed and therefore incapable of normal sex intercourse. Even before Henry's death he seems to have made himself intimate with her, perhaps to an indelicate extent, although she was only thirteen years old. Now that she was about fifteen and he a man of forty he renewed his attentions and she apparently admitted extremely intimate liberties. Indeed all her life she was so greedy of men's attentions that one supposes that perhaps the charges of wild license against her mother, Anne Boleyn, may have been true. Now to tamper with a Princess of the blood royal or

to try to marry her without the knowledge of the Sovereign—in this case the Council headed by Thomas' brother Somerset—meant death for high treason. Thomas was therefore beheaded. Elizabeth was searchingly examined as to her relations with him, and in spite of her extreme youth she defended herself skillfully.

King Edward, now eleven years and three months old, recorded his uncle Thomas' death in his diary without comment.

Meanwhile Somerset and the Council had published a book of *Homilies* written by Cranmer to be read in all churches, maintaining the Lutheran and Calvinistic doctrine of salvation by faith alone without reference to good works. Gardiner and other conservatives could not conscientiously accept this. When he moderately but vigorously protested, the Council replied in revolutionary fashion by arbitrarily imprisoning him without any form of law for some four months. During his imprisonment Parliament sanctioned the marriage of bishops and priests, and replaced Henry VIII's extreme treason and heresy laws with older and less tyrannical statutes. Then Gardiner was arbitrarily released.

At one of his examinations a new actor appears, William Cecil, a physically little man of undistinguished ancestry, the grandson of an inn-keeper and the son of a minor official of Henry VIII's. Able and industrious, at twenty-seven he had become Somerset's private secretary.

The Council's next religious step was the publication of an English *Order of Communion*. This was not to supersede the Latin Mass, at which the celebrating priest usually communicated alone; it was inserted in the Mass after the Priest's Communion, with permission for those who wished to communicate also to drink from the chalice.

Somerset then ordered Gardiner to preach before the King and Court on obedience to the law without reference to the Eucharist. This last command, the Bishop said, he could not conscientiously obey. In his sermon he indeed stressed the duty of obedience, and when he spoke of the Sacrament he did not maintain transubstantiation as defined in the Thirteenth Century, i.e. that after the consecration only the outward appearance of bread and wine remains in the

consecrated elements. Nevertheless he insisted on the mystical Real Presence of Our Lord's body and blood in those elements. For this reason he was again imprisoned in the Tower of London. To anticipate events, he remained there until after Edward VI's death five years later.

Early in 1549 the Council took another radical step by publishing an English book of Common Prayer written by Cranmer. Although the Latin Mass had come to symbolize Western unity, there was nothing sacrosanct about Latin. Educated men may already have known that in Rome itself services had originally been in Greek since most of the earliest Christians there had used that language. Also nearly all Eastern Christians, whether or not in communion with the Papacy, have always used their own languages and their own forms of the Eucharist. Nevertheless in Sixteenth Century England an English Mass was a violation of custom.

This is not the place to discuss the doctrines of the beautifully written Prayer Book of 1549. Suffice it here that the late-medieval abuses from which the Western Church was then suffering had suggested to the Sixteenth Century innovators that those abuses were indissolubly connected with intellectual corruptions of the original, pure Faith—intellectual corruptions not always authoritatively and irrevocably defined but widely believed and acted upon. For instance there was a prevalent error to the effect that the sacrifice of Our Lord upon the Cross availed only for original sin and that individually sinful acts could be forgiven only through the sacrifice of the Mass. The learned Jesuit E. de Moreau in *La Crise Religieuse du XVII<sup>ème</sup> Siècle* has written: "It must be admitted that although the Church never taught erroneous doctrine she did not then react energetically enough against certain false conceptions of dogma which her preachers did not correct clearly and sometimes . . . helped to create . . . Even among the clergy religious ignorance reached extraordinary proportions. How many of the faithful firmly believed that an indulgence was gained solely by paying alms and that in order to be sure of Heaven it was enough to be devout toward the Virgin Mary!"

A few years later in a letter to Queen Mary Tudor Cranmer summarized the confusion of the time when he wrote of

"learned men . . . Some favoring the old, some the new learning as they term (it)—where indeed that which they call the old is the new and that which they call the new is indeed the old."

As to continuity between the old and the new, while nearly all of the continental religious innovators broke with the apostolic succession through bishops—as we saw in Chapter X in Luther's case—the Church of England has always insisted that she has preserved it. As we saw in the last chapter, that succession has been universal through the historic Church—at the very least since she came into the full light of history before A.D. 200. Although Roman Catholics maintain from their interpretation of historical evidence that the intention to make true bishops and priests was at one time or another lost in the Anglican communion, no one can deny that at least an outward continuity of bishops from the Apostles—and therefore of priests—was preserved. Non-Roman Catholics will agree that this preservation must imply the intention to do what the preservers thought that the Apostles did.

Returning to the Prayer Book of 1549, if we modernize the Sixteenth Century spelling it speaks of "The Supper of the Lord and Holy Communion, commonly called the 'Mass.'" Its Canon, the essential part of the Eucharist including a prayer or prayers of consecration and the act of communion, closely followed the Latin Canon but Cranmer and his co-workers were conscious of a difficulty freely acknowledged by certain Roman Catholics of our own day. Cardinal Gasquet and Edmund Fisher in *Edward VI and the Book of Common Prayer* say of the Latin Canon that "there are passages in it which it is not easy to explain." Adrian Fortescue in his *Orthodox Eastern Church*: "The order in which our [i.e. the present] Latin Canon now stands is a great problem."

The reason for most of these difficulties is that the prayer known as the Epiklesis or Invocation has almost totally disappeared from the present Latin Mass. In all Eastern Services and in the modern Scottish and American "Episcopalian" Prayer Books the Words of Institution, which recite what Our Lord did at the Last Supper, are followed by a prayer in which God is entreated or invoked to repeat the miracle by which Our Lord's body and blood become really present



in the bread and wine. This Invocation is believed in the Orthodox Eastern Church to be the essence of the consecration. Scholars are agreed that the earliest Western Service Books followed the same order. In Rome, however, the opinion grew up that the change in the elements was accomplished by the Words of Institution—"This is my body" and "This is my blood"—so that the Invocation was unnecessary. Accordingly at some time which we cannot fix for want of evidence the Invocation was dropped out and replaced by two short prayers, one before and one after the Words of Institution, neither of which prayers fully expresses the original idea. This Roman form had gradually come to prevail throughout the West.

The authors of the Book of 1549 made a few changes in order to suppress these historical anomalies and to give the service a more logical order. Some of these changes were merely the transposition of certain prayers. For instance the prayer for the dead follows immediately after that for the living. In accord with the ancient Mozarabic form of service once used everywhere in Spain, the Words of Institution were made to follow more closely the form used by St. Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians—the prevailing Latin version had followed the form given by the first three evangelists. Also an Invocation immediately precedes those Words.

The one place in which this first English Mass departed from the Latin form in order to make a doctrinal point is the insertion of the statement that Our Lord upon the cross "made there, by his one oblation once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." This was expressly intended to rule out the frequently held late-medieval opinion that Our Lord's original sacrifice of Himself did not avail in satisfaction for the particular sins committed by individuals. The prohibition against "elevating" the Host was also aimed at this or at some other similar late-medieval error, but since that practice had become customary in the West only in the Thirteenth or at the earliest in the Eleventh Century it is impossible to consider it essential to a true Mass.

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The Prayer Book of 1549 was ordered to be first used in June of that year. Parliament, always docile throughout the whole Tudor period, passed an unprecedented Act of Uniformity providing heavy penalties for not using it—throughout the Middle Ages no civil government had ever tried to dictate the form of Church services. Since local insurrections promptly broke out, some historians have held that the English Prayer Book was the chief cause of the risings. The Council were indeed prepared for trouble with mercenary troops, most of them Germans and Italians, and with field artillery. Upon examination, however, religion appears not to have been the principal motive of the disorders. In fact, the rebels in general were noticeably less zealous for what was popularly called the "Old Religion" than their predecessors under Henry VIII fifteen years before.

The same economic and social forces which had roused the German peasants in the 1520's and had helped to produce the northern English risings were still active. Landlords, using the Roman Law with its insistence upon written contracts and its doctrine of absolute land ownership, were steadily encroaching upon the medieval, customary rights which had protected the cultivators of the soil from eviction and had given them access to the Common Lands. An old rhyme says:

We prosecute the man and woman  
Who steals the goose from off the common,  
But leave the larger felon loose,  
Who steals the common from the goose.

The "enclosure" of agricultural land and villages, turning out the villagers in order to use what had formerly been tilled fields for sheep pasture, was still actively going forward. Also the continuous rise in prices, now stimulated by bullion pouring into Spain from the Americas, was pressing upon all classes except the merchants and especially upon the poor. The currency had been repeatedly devalued.

Somerset himself had to some extent acted in favor of the oppressed people. He had set up commissions which had returned to agriculture certain lands recently enclosed for pasture. Some of the vehement preachers who were urging

religious innovations, Latimer for instance, were conservative in political and economic ideas like Luther, and were continually denouncing the hardships visited upon the poor. On the other hand the Protector could not permit open revolt against his government.

The insurrection of 1549 occurred in an arc of territory from Cornwall and Devon in the far southwest through the Midlands to the east coast. In Norfolk the rebels, far from desiring a return to Medieval or Henrician Catholicism, favored religious innovation and would gladly have gone further than the government. In the Midlands the grievances complained of seem to have been wholly social and economic. Conservative religious enthusiasm played a part only in the far southwest. In Cornwall and Devon local upper class leaders came forward, and the Celtic-speaking common people who knew no English ridiculed the new English Service as "a Christmas game." Most of the written demands of the Cornishmen were religious but none were specifically pro-papal. One, however, was that no gentleman who did not have an annual income of more than one hundred marks ought to be allowed to have more than one servant. Moreover the distinguished English historian of the period, Professor Pollard, holds that popular feeling was chiefly behind this article. Besides the demand for the Latin Mass, other demands were that some of the suppressed abbeys and chantries should be restored, also certain ceremonies and articles of church furniture including Holy Water, Altar candles, Ashes on Ash Wednesday and Palms on Palm Sunday. The abolition of the English Bibles was also insisted upon because those Bibles contained allegedly heretical translations.

What the local clergy were like may be judged from the records of a visitation of the neighboring Diocese of Gloucester in 1551; out of three hundred and eleven priests examined a hundred and seventy-one could not repeat the Ten Commandments in English, ten could not say the Lord's Prayer—apparently they could not translate into English the Latin Paternoster which they probably knew well enough—twenty-seven could not name its author and thirty could not tell where it was to be found. Sixty-two incumbents, most of them pluralists not resident in the Diocese, were absent.

By the end of the summer the veteran mercenaries and the cannon of the Council had savagely put down all the rebellions. As in the German peasants' war, even the crude artillery of the time had played a great part. Paradoxically enough, however, the success weakened Somerset's position. The chief hero of the little fights and the massacres had been Dudley. Like practically all the newly enriched he hated Somerset's action against enclosures; one of his own parks had been ordered ploughed up by the Protector's Commissions. He secretly made advances to important individuals of both parties, and even managed to persuade the child King against Somerset who was the latter's uncle. The Protector's execution of his own brother Thomas must have alarmed other powerful men. Somerset was consequently imprisoned.

There followed a short pause like that after Henry's death, while the new Master of England hesitated. Opinion was confused because the overthrow of Edward Seymour had been supported by certain religious conservatives and also by some of the religious radicals. Presently, however, Dudley decided to push the country further away from religious tradition. Consequently Somerset, who had begun the policy of religious innovation, was released and readmitted to membership in the Council. He promptly began trying to build up a religiously conservative party in his own favor.

Meanwhile Dudley's Parliament enthusiastically supported the movement to enclose lands which was profiting so many of its members. In handing out more of the former Abbey lands still held by the Crown, it has been thought that probably no English Ministry was more corrupt than his. Dudley also had himself created Duke of Northumberland.

Part of the former Protector's plan to form a religiously conservative party was to have Gardiner released if the latter would approve of the 1549 Prayer Book. Somerset and certain other lay-councillors visited the distinguished prisoner who had formerly refused to give an opinion about the Book while arbitrarily imprisoned without indictment or trial. They now persuaded him. On a second visit he said that he could accept Cranmer's work because it strongly safeguarded "the truth of the very presence of Christ's most precious body and blood in the Sacrament." Also "He liked the declaration



... in the end of the Book, whereby appeared the Catholic doctrine not to be touched but only ceremonies removed, which... was wisely handled." Dudley, however, had no intention of setting Gardiner free. He kept him in the Tower and early in 1551 had him formally deprived of the Bishopric of Winchester after a trial full of shameless perjury.

Meanwhile in the opening days of 1550 an Act of Parliament ordered all "images" in churches to be destroyed—a violation of all Christian tradition, for even the persecuted Church in the catacombs had made pictures of Our Lord, and nearly eight centuries before Edward VI's time the Second Council of Nicea, the last Ecumenical Council recognized in both East and West, had regulated the degree of reverence to be shown to paintings and statues of sacred subjects. Another Act ordered the replacement of all altars by communion tables, a change which could be defended by scholars since Christian altars had originally been ordinary tables approachable from all sides. In Eastern Christendom the altar has always been a free-standing block, and in the West at least as late as the Ninth Century priests when celebrating Mass had faced the congregation across such a table or block. Nevertheless the change—or rather the attempted change, for the Act seems not to have been everywhere obeyed—shocked people.

Presently William Cecil, Somerset's secretary who had all his careless master's papers, decided to betray that master to Dudley-Northumberland. The latter listened gladly, had the former Protector rearrested and beheaded. It is hard to grieve more over Seymour's fate than for the murder of a contemporary gunman shot by members of his own gang. His execution of his brother had given the other politicians fair warning of what they might expect should he regain power.

As in the case of Thomas Seymour three years before, the diary of King Edward, by this time fourteen, notes the beheading of Uncle Edward without comment.

Cranmer may always have considered the Prayer Book of 1549 as an introduction to more radical changes. His perennially open mind may have been swayed by innovating theologians from the continent whom he had invited to England. At all events he and his theological supporters revised the

1549 Prayer Book so as to remove it further from medieval Catholic practice, striking out or toning down the phrases referring to the Real Presence of Our Lord's body and blood in the Sacrament which Gardiner had so stressed. In the spring of 1552 Dudley put through his ever obedient Parliament a new Uniformity Act which legalized the new Book and ordered the disuse of the earlier one. There was, however, a considerable delay in issuing copies so that the Prayer Book of 1552 seems never to have come into general use.

Indeed the politicians soon found themselves occupied with more pressing matters. However slight was Edward VI's personal influence, his survival was essential to Dudley-Northumberland's government. The boy's divine right was emphasized by ritual acts which seem to us fantastic and almost sacrilegious. All subjects who approached him must kneel five times. At his meals his dishes were not brought in by pages as in other Courts of the day but by gentlemen who were sometimes peers of the realm. Those who served him must kneel on both knees before offering him each dish. When Mary or Elizabeth dined with him they were not permitted to sit near him or on chairs but must sit on stools some distance away. It now began to appear that Edward could not live long.

Mary's well known loyalty to "the Old Religion" made it certain that she would reverse the religious revolution and end Dudley-Northumberland's power. He therefore decided upon a wild scheme. Parliament had authorized Henry to fix the succession by Will and had directed that Mary should reign if Edward died without direct heirs, next that Elizabeth should succeed her sister if Mary too had no heirs. Northumberland proposed to have the boy King change the succession by Will, excluding both Mary and Elizabeth and bestowing the Crown upon Lady Jane Grey, a granddaughter of Henry's sister Mary, in 1553 a gentle girl of sixteen, cultivated and even learned, also a convinced religious innovator. Northumberland, acting through her parents as was then customary among the nobility, had this young woman married to one of his sons, Lord Guilford Dudley.

By the spring of 1553 Edward was sinking rapidly. Nevertheless his hatred for the Papacy with which his father had

broken and for the forms of worship which that father had loved, also his confidence in his own divine right were strong in him. Accordingly he ordered the leading lawyers of the kingdom, including the Chief Justice and the Attorney-General to draw him a Will excluding Mary and Elizabeth and appointing Lady Jane his successor. For several days the lawyers insisted that this would be both illegal and treasonable, giving way only when threatened by the Council and especially by Northumberland. Edward signed, next all the Council including Cecil signed as witnesses—Cranmer doing so under protest—then all but one of the principal lawyers.

The French Ambassador had encouraged Northumberland's idea because Mary was known to have a strong feeling for her Hapsburg cousin the Emperor who was France's rival. Indeed Charles had threatened war if Edward's politicians prevented her having the Latin Mass in her private chapel. The important thing was that most of the country was loyal to the legitimate heiress and in no mood to submit longer to the grafters who had ruled in Edward's name.

The boy king, not yet sixteen, died in July, 1553.

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The conspirators tried to seize Mary while keeping Edward's death secret but she was warned and escaped, riding hard. When Jane was proclaimed Queen the Londoners were sullen while the rest of the kingdom enthusiastically rose in arms for Henry's daughter. Northumberland's own troops began to desert. The French Ambassador, to whom he offered to surrender Calais if France would aid him, would do nothing. Mary was enthusiastically proclaimed Queen in London, and she with Elizabeth rode in triumphantly side by side, Mary in a "gown of purple velvet, French fashion," and her horse equipment embroidered with gold. Through streets full of people shouting "Jesus save Her Grace" she went straight to the tower where Gardiner, the old Duke of Norfolk, a young nobleman named Courtenay who was her second cousin, and Somerset's widow, who were all prisoners there, kneeled before her. Dismounting, she kissed them all, saying "These be my prisoners."

How much the enthusiasm for her was due to specifically

religious motives we cannot say. In London, the center of trade with Flanders, it was probably hoped that her connection with the Hapsburg Dynasty which ruled that country would mean prosperity. We hear nothing of any cheers for the Pope.

Probably not one soul in the crowds who joyfully greeted Mary could have guessed that within less than six years she would die unpopular. After thirty years of retired and unhappy life she was ill-fitted for the business of governing. She was brave but she had no worldly wisdom. Like her mother, she considered political questions in entirely personal terms. As to policy she presently restored the Latin Mass—which had already been spontaneously done in a number of places. When young she had been sufficiently touched by the New Learning to translate or help to translate one of Erasmus' books but now—in part perhaps because of Pope Paul III's championship of her mother and her own revulsion against the doings of Edward's nominal reign—she was determined also to restore papal authority.

She began well. She made her ablest English supporter, Gardiner, Chancellor and followed a policy of gentleness. At first no one except the arch-traitor Northumberland was beheaded—protesting oddly enough on the scaffold that he died in the "old religion" as Thomas Cromwell had done. Even Lady Jane Grey and her husband young Dudley, although condemned as traitors, were only imprisoned. Religious innovators who wished to go abroad were officially or unofficially allowed to do so. She temporarily postponed her desire to replace papal authority, and even respected existing legal forms sufficiently to take the title of Supreme Head of the Church in England. Only a few of those clergy who had led in religious innovation and did not now choose to leave the country, Latimer, Ridley and some lesser men, were arrested.

Cranmer's marriage seems to have been unknown or overlooked because of weightier charges against him. He sent his wife abroad but did not himself try to escape, and was imprisoned only after a violent letter of his to the Queen, which he had written but had not sent, had become public by the action of a friend of his to whom he had given a copy.



That letter protested against the re-establishment of the Latin Mass as a profanation of "The Lord's Holy Supper" and an instigation of the devil. He may have meant to publish it later. He was condemned for treason, but for the time being the sentence was not executed.

The weakness of Mary's political position first appeared in her choice of her Council. She needed men with political experience, also the custom of the time favored politicians of high social standing. She could and did gain supporters by appointing certain gentlemen who had served faithfully in her household, but none of them had previously shared in government and none afterwards showed themselves conspicuously able. For the most part she had to appoint men newly enriched from Abbey lands who had come over to her in time to save themselves, even though she must have known that their ideas were not hers. Thus from the beginning her Council was potentially disunited.

She would not appoint Cecil, although he betrayed Northumberland to her as he had betrayed his first master Edward Seymour to Northumberland. He wrote a long, abject letter full of religious phrases and details put in to show his potential value to the government because of his vast and accurate knowledge of men and affairs. There is a story, probably untrue, that he went about publicly telling over a set of rosary beads. His abilities were inconspicuously used for various political tasks.

It was put to Mary that before reconciling England with Rome she must strengthen her government by taking a husband, which she had no desire to do. She was ugly, short in stature and awkward in movement, with thin reddish hair, a pale complexion, no eyebrows, almost colorless eyes, a wide, flat nose and a big mouth. Her face had a tortured expression which reflected the wretchedness of most of her thirty-seven years. A Spaniard who had had opportunities of observing her added that she dressed badly. Naturally she had never attracted men. The only recorded advances made to her had been those of a courtier whom her father had ordered to try her with indelicate language in order to see what she would do, and that courtier she had angrily repulsed. She sincerely said that she was not personally

inclined to love or marriage. She would therefore choose for political reasons.

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Here she committed her first blunder. To Charles her success in England offered a chance of peacefully increasing the power of his House in spite of his recent defeats. He had failed to get his son Philip recognized as heir to the Empire after Ferdinand should die. He had lost control of the Council and of the Germanies. He was still at war with the French who were successfully holding the Imperial cities of Metz, Toul and Verdun against him. On the other hand the unmarried Queen of England might extend Hapsburg power by marrying his twenty-six-year-old son Philip, now a childless widower. He had his Ambassador in England urge this upon her.

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From Mary's own standpoint and that of her country she should have chosen an Englishman. To marry a foreigner risked drawing England into the endless quarrel between the Hapsburgs and France. Moreover her mildness had by no means disarmed opposition at home. Soon after her happy entry into London religious innovators had been creating disorders there. Hostile pamphlets were appearing in a steady stream, and rumors against her were being spread. An English translation of a Latin book written by Gardiner twenty years before against papal authority and in favor of obeying Henry VIII had been published with sarcastic notes. The restored Papacy might take the immensely rich Abbey lands from their new owners. It was folly to give her enemies another issue which they could raise against her.

Moreover Gardiner had an eligible man to propose: her second cousin Edward Courtenay, handsome, agreeable, young and of great lineage. Mary would not have him for the purely personal reason that after his release from fifteen years of imprisonment on charges of having conspired with the Pole family in 1538, he had promptly begun debauching himself with women. Not only Gardiner but most of her Council and even her Parliament begged her to marry at

home but for once she proved headstrong. It did not occur to her that Charles, her first cousin who had supported her mother and herself throughout long years of adversity, might be advising her for the sake of his own policy and not for her good. She would marry Philip.

Her marriage contract was drawn with every precaution which English ingenuity could imagine. Nevertheless the foresight of those who had urged her to marry an Englishman was to be amply justified.

In January 1554 when she had reigned only six months, Gardiner discovered the existence of a widespread conspiracy, encouraged by the French Court which although strongly conservative in religion, was even more strongly anti-Spanish and was therefore willing to support heresy outside of France if by so doing it could weaken Spain. The reader will remember how Francis I had allied himself with the Turk. Elizabeth certainly knew of the plot, although the conspirators may have meant to enthrone Lady Jane Grey.

The rebellion misfired except in Kent where Sir Francis Wyatt, an energetic man whose family had been enriched out of the Abbey lands, gathered a force with which he marched on London. Interestingly enough, his proclamations stressed opposition to the intended Spanish marriage more than his intention to restore the reformed religion. Thanks largely to the effect on the Londoners of the Queen's courageous bearing he was forced to surrender, and was beheaded some three months later. On the scaffold he may have exonerated Elizabeth. Lady Jane Grey and her husband, whose death sentences for treason had been suspended, were beheaded shortly afterward.

Elizabeth, now twenty, was judicially examined for the second time in her short life. She undoubtedly knew more about the rebellion than she would admit, and Charles advised the Queen to have her executed. She was spared, however.

In July, 1554, Philip arrived and dutifully married his unattractive bride. He was anxious to obey every suggestion from his father who had advised yielding to every English stipulation with respect to the marriage treaty, thinking that so good and inexperienced a Queen could afterward be

managed. Always anxious for English support against France, Charles also advised against prosecutions for heresy in England. He wrote to his son that only those heretics who were enemies of the public peace should be prosecuted, and not for heresy but for treason.

As a husband Philip, eleven years younger than his ugly wife, played his part so conscientiously that she fell head over heels in love with him. Had she borne a child, Charles' scheme for drawing England into the vast Empire which successive Hapsburg marriages had built up might have succeeded. To anticipate events, no child was born. Twice the unhappy Queen mistakenly thought herself pregnant and had public rejoicings ordered but each time the disappointment helped her political enemies to make her ridiculous.

Meanwhile Mary, after reigning more than a year, was still legally Supreme Head of the Church in England. She had been secretly negotiating with the Pope but nothing public had been done. In this too the Emperor had had his way, for he had insisted that she should first marry Philip. Although everyone knew that the Queen wished to return to papal obedience, and Gardiner had reminded her first Parliament of the sin of schism, for the time being the country had of itself reverted to a religious settlement like Henry VIII's. As we have seen, the Latin Mass had been restored. Married priests and bishops had been either deprived or separated from their wives, but Henry's anti-papal legislation still stood on the statute-books. Cardinal Pole whom the Pope had promptly named as Legate to England on Mary's accession, had been kept waiting on the Continent until Charles should give the word as he now did.

Pope Julius III, an easygoing canon lawyer, approached the question of England's return to his authority in a statesmanlike spirit. The difficult point was of course that of the Abbey lands. Their confiscation under Henry had been flat sacrilege according to the traditional Church Law of Western Christendom. The unworldly Mary and the equally unworldly Cardinal Pole both saw it in that light. On the other hand, the seizures had begun eighteen years before, and by this time much of the confiscated wealth had slipped through the fingers of Henry and Edward. Moreover that wealth had



been widely distributed, and the powerful new millionaires were determined to hold it. Some of the former Abbey lands were now held by second or third owners who had done nothing directly sacrilegious. Consequently to try to force a general restoration would have been politically so dangerous that in practice it was impossible.

Julius III finally decided that since it was permissible to alienate Church property in order to ransom prisoners—presumably prisoners in the hands of infidels—so it was permissible to do so in order to regain a kingdom for the Faith. In the fall of 1554 Pole therefore landed, and on November 30 in a splendid ceremony held by torchlight in the presence of Mary, Philip, the Council and both Houses of Parliament England was absolved and restored to communion with Rome.

The settlement was obviously fragile. Its continuance depended greatly upon the extent to which the newly enriched could be persuaded to believe that it was intended to be permanent. That would be difficult, for even if Julius III's good faith were taken for granted there was nothing to prevent some future Pope revoking his concession. Accordingly Mary's government would have been wise to show by all their actions that they meant to observe not only the letter but the spirit of the arrangement.

Gardiner saw this—incidentally in his youth he had been no great admirer of monks—but the Queen and Pole did not. The Cardinal worked from the very beginning to weaken the effect of the concession which the Chancellor had successfully urged upon the Pope. Pole's responsibility is the greater because he realized the determination of the new millionaires. After reconciling England to the Papacy, he wrote to Rome: "I yesterday absolved the kingdom on condition that the present owners of the Abbey lands should keep them. They would have turned Mohammedan on the same terms." But although he understood the difficulty he would not let well enough alone. In his speech of reconciliation he had not so much as mentioned the Abbey lands.

Three weeks later he consented to say that none of the present owners should ever be censured by the Church but

even then he refused to absolve their consciences. He thought and encouraged Mary to think that none of the newly enriched ought to consider themselves free from sin short of total restoration. In the spring of 1554 the Queen announced her intention to restore to monastic uses most of the estates still held by the Crown. She actually did restore some, and was kept from doing so with the others only by her government's need of money.

Meanwhile Mary's advisers found themselves compelled to deal with the determined religious innovators. They continually insulted her religion which was also that of their fathers—a commonplace of theirs was that the Latin Mass, to which most Englishmen were still attached, was "abominable idolatry." Some threatened the lives of priests. One actually knifed a priest who was giving Communion at Easter. They also sympathized with armed rebellion. Ridley had preached in favor of Lady Jane Grey and against Mary.

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Thus provoked, the government committed the second great blunder of the reign by changing its policy of mildness to one of severity. Philip tried to prevent this. Remembering his father's advice, he urged that the prosecutions should be for treason and not for heresy. According to some accounts he had his chaplain, a Spanish Franciscan friar, preach before the Court advocating gentleness and even doubting whether it was right to burn heretics. The Council, on the contrary, insisted on prosecuting for heresy. They were Englishmen, and they would show this foreign Prince that he could not be master of England! Some who had suffered under Edward VI had personal motives for severity. Also conservatives were shocked at the blasphemy poured out by many innovators. Mary consented.

Gardiner probably thought that a little firmness would settle matters. Henry had killed only a very few papalists or religious radicals except for armed rebellion, and only a handful of eccentrics who had denied Our Lord's full divinity had been executed for conscience sake under Edward. Gardiner himself was not personally cruel. He had made it easy

for heretics to leave the country, and had protected certain others who remained.

Instead the government soon found that it had on its hands people full of that exalted mood which enemies call crazy fanaticism while friends call it heroic fortitude. Nearly four hundred innovators went to the stake during the reign, most of them simple, ignorant people, laborers or handicraftsmen with their wives and children. The record of their interrogations is pathetic. Four women from an eastern county when examined by a bishop did not know how many sacraments there were. One of them had heard of one sacrament, but did not know what it was. All four, on the other hand, were firmly convinced that Our Lord's natural body is in heaven and not in the Mass which is "an idol."

The burnings began in 1555. Latimer and Ridley, bound back to back to the same stake, died bravely like most of the lesser victims. Latimer said just before the fire was lit: "Be of good cheer, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day by God's Grace light such a candle in England as, I trust, shall never be put out."

Cranmer, on the other hand, tried to save his life by recanting—a weakness in him easily pardoned by modern people who will seriously consider so horrible a death. In his case final judgment was postponed until he had been formally deprived of clerical privileges by a special ceremony of degradation. Also, since his pliant character was known, the government hoped to score a political point by making him deny his innovating opinions. While in prison he was worked upon by two Spanish friars, and was allowed to see from a tower window the execution of Latimer and Ridley.

Meanwhile two misfortunes fell upon Mary. First the Emperor Charles, toothless and worn out by his labors and by many years of over-eating and drinking, resolved to abdicate. He would leave his Imperial authority and the hereditary Hapsburg Austrian lands to his brother Ferdinand. Philip whom he had already made King of Naples, would receive first the rich Burgundian inheritance including the present Holland and Belgium and other districts now French, next Spain with its overseas dominions. Consequently Mary and her kingdom became less important to her

husband. Late in the summer of 1555 he left England, to return only for one short politically disastrous visit.

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After all his labors the ailing Emperor had failed in almost everything. He was beginning to see that either he or his successor must make peace with France without regaining Metz, Toul and Verdun for the Empire. The hardest blow of all was that Ferdinand was insisting that Lutheranism must be definitely tolerated. The elder Hapsburg had an invincible scruple of conscience against surrendering Catholic principles himself but he yielded to necessity and agreed to ratify such a surrender if Ferdinand would arrange it. In 1555 the settlement was made at Augsburg, where Cajetan had received Luther thirty-seven years before. It put Catholicism and Lutheranism on an equal footing in accordance with the principles of local autonomy, in Latin *cujus regio ejus religio*—"to whom the region to him the religion." Princes of either Faith could expel dissenters from their principalities. The Calvinists, Zwinglians and other lesser Protestant bodies were not mentioned, but at any rate the Emperor's long-cherished hope for religious reunion in the Germanies was not only dead but buried. A final disappointment was the childlessness of Philip and Mary's marriage which destroyed the possibility of permanently bringing England into the Hapsburg system.

At fifty-five but prematurely aged, Charles had already ordered the building of a retired country house for himself in Spain. He laid down his Burgundian inheritance at Brussels in a moving ceremony in October, 1555, in the great hall which is now the Town Hall. Hardly able to stand, he leaned on the shoulder of a young man, William Prince of Orange. Weeping and so weak that he could hardly make his voice heard, in the Flemish dialect he bade an affectionate farewell to his native province. The crowd wept with him. A few months later he laid down the Spanish kingdoms and the Americas, and in 1558 after formerly resigning the Empire to Ferdinand he died—the last of the principal actors in Luther's revolt.

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In addition to Mary's two great blunders, first in marrying Philip and next in consenting to prosecute English heretics for heresy and not for treason, and her first two misfortunes, i.e. in remaining childless and in Philip's continental pre-occupations due to his father's abdication, the unhappy Queen presently suffered another series of mishaps.

The first of these was also a misfortune for the Papacy. Early in 1555 Julius III had died. Often sickly and sometimes temporarily paralysed, he had done little since the second adjournment from Trent. He was temporarily succeeded by Cardinal Cervini, his former colleague as Legate at Trent who took the name of Marcellus II and promptly died in his turn. He in turn was succeeded by the harsh Theatine monk, Cardinal Giovanni Pietro Caraffa who took the title of Paul IV. At the moment a less fortunate choice could hardly have been imagined.

He was elected Pope somewhat to his own surprise, for he said that he had never done anyone a favor. At seventy-nine he was astonishingly vigorous. Tall, thin, active and light on his feet, it was said that he had never taken medicine in his life, and that after transacting business all day he would often read all night. His meals were frugal, and in spite of his great age he insisted on keeping all the canonical fasts. Even on his deathbed he would not break the Church's rules of abstinence. His portraits show him with sparse, grey hair, a heavy beard, a strong wilful mouth and deeply sunk, brilliant eyes. He was a Neapolitan whose vehement speech has reminded historians of the volcanic eruptions of his native province. Moreover he was of a family which had suffered exile and the loss of fortune for supporting the unsuccessful French claim to the throne of Naples, and he consequently hated the Hapsburgs.

In spite of his good intentions his pontificate was disastrous because of inept administration, excessive self-confidence, inability to estimate circumstances and people, and frequent lapses from charity. Although he knew both Greek and Hebrew and had at one time encouraged Erasmus, as Pope he put all the latter's works—even those which are in no way concerned with religion—on the first papal *Index* of forbidden books, and did the same with Dante's *De Monarchia*.

He promptly hurled the Papacy into a disastrous war with Spain of which the consequences would have been even worse but for Philip's moderation. Wholly misjudging his period, he tried to act as if he were one of the great medieval Popes who had dominated Europe. To him all princes were his subjects who ought to obey him. Although he did not actually try to depose Charles and Ferdinand for tolerating the Lutherans at Augsburg in 1555, nevertheless he seriously considered such a folly. He would not reopen the Council of Trent because he wished to reform the Church solely by the authority of his own office. Nevertheless he made sincere and to some extent successful attempts to reform the clergy, especially in Rome itself.

His shortcomings interest us chiefly as they affected Mary Tudor's England. Soon after his election in May he let it be known that he could not sanction Pole's settlement of the question of the confiscated Abbey lands. He ordered a list made of all former Church property and income in England—obviously in preparation for a demand for restitution. Since this would be politically impossible, he put Mary's government—which was already actively burning heretics!—in an impossible position. As if dislike for the Spanish connection and for the apparently endless burning of religious innovators were not enough, there were crop failures, inflated prices and the restoration by Mary herself of some of the Abbey lands which had remained in the hands of the Crown. Mary's imaginary pregnancies were ridiculed.

Next Gardiner's health began to fail. He drove himself to attend to public business, making a fine speech at the opening of Parliament in October in which he assured everyone that Philip would never be crowned King of England and no one's former title to Church lands would be questioned. Before mid-November, however, he died.

Mary made Pole her chief adviser but that unworldly man was a poor substitute for Gardiner.

In the spring of 1556 Cranmer was burned. To the Queen he was the man who had annulled her mother's marriage as incestuous and had had herself pronounced a bastard. Gardiner too had worked for the annulment but had suffered under Edward for his faith in the Sacrament.

For some time Cranmer had hoped in the accepted custom that a heretic who recanted ought not to be killed. His recantations during his two years and six months imprisonment form a theological chromatic scale. First, following his doctrine of royal supremacy, he merely promised submission to all laws which Mary might make. Next, although still appealing to "the judgment of the Catholic Church and the next General Council" he specifically promised to obey the laws restoring papal authority. In February the Queen signed the warrant to burn him, but still the end was delayed for nearly a month. He was allowed more liberty, recreation and companionship, and perhaps told that he would be freed and even given great promotion if he did what was asked of him. Probably he was also told that he must burn if he did not. Not yet knowing that nothing could save him, he signed two more recantations, the first accepting the entire medieval Catholic scheme including transubstantiation, the Pope as Christ's vicar and Supreme Head of the Church, no salvation outside of the Church, and curses upon Luther and Zwingli. The second abjectly deplored his own previous conduct, the annulment of Queen Catherine's marriage and the leading astray of many souls.

On March 20, 1556, orders to have him burned next day reached Oxford where he had been imprisoned. Probably he knew this when on the last night of his life he drew up still another recantation refusing submission to the Pope and returning substantially to Henry VIII's position. He believed, so he wrote, all the articles of the Catholic Faith taught by Christ, the Apostles and the Old and New Testament prophets and "all articles . . . set forth in the General Councils."

Next day he was taken to St. Mary's Church, Oxford, and put up on a sort of stage to listen to a sermon and to make a final statement of his own. He was expected to read one or more of his most submissive recantations. Instead he defied his audience. He said the Lord's Prayer but pointedly omitted to say the Hail Mary, although that prayer as then said in England consisted only of the angel's salutation to Our Lady without the request for Her prayers. He begged his hearers to care less for this world, to obey the King and Queen more

from fear of God than from fear of them, to love one another, doing good to all and giving to the poor. He then proclaimed his faith, recanted all his recent recantations, repeating all the formulas which he had written in 1552 including a statement like that into which Eck had entrapped Luther a generation before to the effect that General Councils might err. Since his right hand had been offended by writing lies, he would see to it, he said, that it should be the first part of his body to be burned, "and as for the Pope, I refuse him as Christ's enemy and Anti-Christ, with all his false doctrine. And as for the Sacrament—" here he was dragged from the stage on which he stood.

Still strong in body in spite of his sixty-seven years, he shook himself free, ran to the stake with the crowd running after him, and stood unresistingly to be fastened to it with an iron band around his waist. When told that by dying thus he was dragging innumerable souls to Hell he answered only by thrusting his right hand into the first flames. Once with his yet unburnt left hand he wiped his forehead but made no other movement and no sound and so died.

The government's attempt to use him for its propaganda had badly misfired.

On the same day Pole, whom Mary had nominated Archbishop of Canterbury, said his first Mass as a priest. Until then, although a cardinal, he had been only in deacon's orders.

Before the year 1556 was out, there followed events which in a lighter matter would have been comic. Philip, the leading champion of the Papacy in Europe and the husband of Mary who had restored papal authority in England, found himself at war with the Pope! Paul IV allied himself with the French and persuaded them once again to make war. He revoked Pole's authority as Legate for England and summoned him to Rome to be tried for heresy on the foolish charge that the Cardinal—after twenty-one years in exile for loyalty to the Papacy!—had heretically favored the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith alone. Mary would not let the Pope's messengers land in England but still the blow was a heavy one.

Next spring Philip returned for a short visit to his wife



and succeeded in adding her kingdom to the enemies of the Pope. The fears of Gardiner and others as to the Spanish marriage were now justified. An eminent historian has written: "To Paul IV, perhaps, as much as to anyone else, . . . the triumph of the Reformation in England was ultimately due."

Fate had still another misfortune in store for her. The only remnant of the Plantagenet conquests on the Continent was Calais. As national feeling had grown stronger, that city had become a badge of English pride, but English financial difficulties had kept the defences in dis-repair. In January 1558 the place surrendered to the French after a siege of less than a week. On receiving the news the Queen said: "When I die, Calais will be found written on my heart."

In England the burnings of religious innovators had gone steadily on, adding to the government's unpopularity although not for the same reason that Twentieth Century people would suppose. In the early Middle Ages heretics had sometimes been lynched by fire. On one occasion the Queen of France with a sharp stick had jabbed out one of the eyes of one of them on his way to the stake. Burning them had since become a routine matter symbolic of the total destruction of such criminals. The pain had often been mitigated by strangling the victims before the fire reached them. Bags of gunpowder had been hung on Latimer and Ridley so that the explosions might shorten their suffering. But there is little trace of anything like our modern humanitarian feeling about such matters, as we shall see when we come to Elizabeth. What helped to turn opinion against Mary was chiefly the great number of the executions in an England where previously there had been few heretics to burn. There was now an appreciable minority which sympathized with the victims and was opposed to any punishment being inflicted upon them.

She was not destined to live long. In the late summer of 1558 her always weak health was seen to be failing still more, and in November she who has since been called "Bloody Mary" died, devoutly repeating the responses of the Latin Mass and saying that she saw angels at her bedside. Within twenty-four hours Pole too was dead of fever.

Elizabeth at twenty-four became Queen. She was of middle height but her upright carriage made her seem tall. Red-haired like Mary, her half-sister, she had greenish-hazel eyes and a somewhat bony face, a thin aquiline nose and slightly drooping eyelids which gave her a cold, harsh expression when in repose. On the other hand she was vivacious and had beautiful hands to which she often called attention by gestures.

Adversity had hardened her. As a child she must have learned how her father had had her mother, Anne Boleyn, beheaded after being convicted of adultery and incest, and had had Elizabeth herself declared illegitimate by English statute law. That father's Will had put her next in succession if Edward VI and Mary Tudor died childless, but he had neglected her and had never legally reversed her illegitimacy. At fifteen she had been precociously responsive to Thomas Seymour's love-making, and had defended herself with some skill when formally examined by the Council as to the liberties which she had allowed that handsome rascal. Under Mary she had been imprisoned and examined on suspicion of guilty knowledge of Wyatt's rebellion, and again nothing had been proved. Incidentally it had been Philip who had persuaded Mary to release her. After being tossed about by the fierce cross-currents of three religious and political revolutions she had learned caution, also to change her mind whenever that might seem expedient.

As Queen she could indulge her passionate desire to be wooed by men and for such sexual intimacy as her deformity permitted. She had a long succession of male favorites—the position of the earlier members of the series being not so undignified as that of the later ones when she was old and hideous—but her passion for men was seldom softened by affection. Foreigners and the common people who of course knew nothing of her physical defect naturally drew their own conclusions as to what were really her incomplete amours. In public she enjoyed playing the gracious and kindly sovereign, but few of her many recorded sayings seem to show genuine feeling.

Her personal religious beliefs have been much debated.

When under examination in Mary's reign she wrote the famous quatrain

His was the word that spake it.  
He took the bread and break it  
And what that word doth make it  
That I believe and take it.

This she offered as evidence of belief in the Catholic view of the Sacrament. Had she been free she would probably have favored an anti-papal but otherwise traditional settlement much like her father's. Some have thought that she would have liked a modified Latin Mass and would have allowed communion in both kinds and the marriage of the clergy, although her subsequent conduct makes this last point very doubtful.

She was not free. Instead she was as frustrated in policy as in love. Her first royal act was to appoint William Cecil her Secretary. She had known the little, wizened man for at least ten years, for at fifteen she had rejected a tutor whom the kindly Catherine Parr and Thomas Seymour had proposed to her and had chosen one whom Cecil favored. Professor Conyers Read recently wrote that it is hard to tell how far he worked for England, for Protestantism or for himself. Very able and diligent, he was now thirty-nine years old, and until his death many years afterward he so often persuaded her to follow his advice instead of her own impulses in important matters that she has been considered a mere puppet of his. In that case she was at least a clever puppet, for sovereigns then had to transact much government business in person, for instance interviews with ambassadors all of whom, however shrewd, considered her the chief power in the country. Even Belloc speaks of Cecil's dread of her "spasmodic rebellions against his domination."

Philip, although repeatedly warned, never understood that Cecil was the leader of the combined parties opposed to the "Old Religion," the men who had the former Abbey lands and the enthusiastic religious radicals. Elizabeth's leading supporters formed a closely united clique or club. For instance, the fat Nicholas Bacon, an able lawyer and one of the new millionaires, had married a sister of Cecil's wife.

Another of Cecil's brothers-in-law, Russell had a sister married to the brother of Leicester, Elizabeth's first favorite, while her last favorite, Essex, was Leicester's stepson. Thus the new regime, unlike Mary's divided Council, had a united political "machine," as Americans would say, behind it.

Most English people if free to choose would probably, like the Queen herself, have preferred to continue the Latin Mass. This is asserted not only by Roman Catholics but also on the high authority of the Anglican Benedictine Dom Gregory Dix who writes in his *Shape of the Liturgy*: "Secular historians are agreed that down to 1588 a waning majority of Englishmen desired the old rites." Since popular voting was then unknown there are no figures. In fact mere voting, which is often done languidly, is less important than the question of how many people will work hard and run risks for a cause. The Communists have taught us how much tiny groups can sometimes accomplish. Many Englishmen must have been confused by so many revolutions, the Papacy was unpopular, and the vehement innovators—most of them in London and certain other seaports—had gained popular sympathy by their courage under Mary's persecution, and would not be satisfied with a settlement which retained the Latin Mass. Accordingly Cecil and his group would innovate more sweepingly than Henry VIII but would also try to carry with them as many traditionalists as they could.

Elizabeth's first gestures show that Cecil and she must have worked out their program in advance. On entering London she would not let a zealously pro-papal bishop kiss her hand. When the monks of Westminster Abbey met her with lighted candles she cried: "Away with those tapers! We have no need of lights." At Christmas she ordered the bishop who was to sing the Latin High Mass before her not to elevate the Host, and when he refused she left after the Gospel. On the other hand, for the moment she retained all Mary's legislation except that she would not take the title of "Supreme Head" of the Church which Henry, Edward—and even Mary temporarily—had borne. Her first proclamation veiled that title in a discreet "Etcetera." By this time what seems to us the strange custom of having the English State prescribe the form of religion was firmly established.



Legal religious innovation began when the new Queen's first Parliament, meeting in January, 1559, passed two important bills which became law by her assent in May. The first rejected papal authority and made the Queen not "Supreme Head" but "Supreme Governor" of the Church of England. The other directed further religious innovations. The laity were to be allowed to drink from the Communion Cup. The clergy might be married. Outside of the universities church services were to be in English according to a revised version of Edward VI's second Prayer Book, that of 1552. In that Book Cranmer had not only struck out several phrases which he himself had written in the Book of 1549 because those phrases explicitly asserted the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Sacrament. He had also inserted a so-called "Black Rubric" which explicitly denied that Presence. Now an important change was that this Rubric was omitted.

Opposition appeared only in the House of Lords, especially from those of Mary's bishops who were present. Five of the twenty-seven bishoprics had already been vacant at Elizabeth's accession, and five deaths had since occurred. Of the remaining seventeen bishops only ten appeared and voted with one lay-Lord against the break with the Papacy. Nine bishops and nine lay-Lords voted against the second bill, so that according to Bishop Frere's *History of the English Church* it passed the Lords by a majority of three. According to Dom Gregory Dix's *Shape of the Liturgy* the majority was only one, a difference which may have been due to proxy voting.

The Act of Parliament provided for deprivation of clergy who would not conform and for fines and imprisonment of recalcitrant clergy and laity, but these penalties were mildly enforced even against the Marian bishops. Two of these now conformed: Kitchin of Llandaff in Wales who had been consecrated under Henry, and Stanley of the Isle of Man. The rest were one by one deprived and all but one were at least nominally imprisoned. Most of the lower clergy, Belloc says almost certainly three-quarters and possibly seven-eighths or nine-tenths, conformed. A Royal Commission directed altars to be replaced by movable communion tables with nothing on them except the chalice and paten at service time—in accord

with what seems to have been the universal practice of the first Christian centuries—but this order was not vigorously enforced. Moreover these tables were ordered to be covered with “frontals,” cloths hanging down in front and at the sides which made them look somewhat like the former altars. In the Royal chapel the altar was retained with a crucifix and candles upon it.

Matthew Parker, a religious innovator but a modest and conciliatory scholar who had been Dean of Lincoln under Edward VI and had been deprived but not otherwise molested in Mary’s reign, was made Archbishop of Canterbury. He was regularly consecrated in December, 1559, according to the Edwardian ordinal by bishops who had been deprived under Mary.

England received the settlement of 1559 quietly. Pope Paul IV’s war against Mary had helped to make the Papacy unpopular. Lay communion in both kinds, services in the vernacular languages and the marriage of priests were all being advocated by loyal papalists on the Continent. Philip urged the Pope to rule that the new English service had nothing uncatholic about it, and for eleven years successive Popes made no attempt to discourage English religious conservatives from going to their parish churches as most of them apparently did.

Early in Elizabeth’s reign active religious dissent came chiefly from certain extreme innovators of a Calvinistic sort. These men, soon called Puritans, accepted the enforcement of Calvinism by the city government of Geneva but thought Anglicanism almost as bad as the Papacy itself. At first, however, they objected chiefly to the vestments of the Anglican clergy because they considered those vestments badges of priesthood.

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In August 1559 the conscientious but unwise and uncharitable Pope Paul IV died. He had been so unpopular with the Roman masses that they joyfully rioted at his death, broke a marble statue of him, pillaged the Friary of the Dominicans who had administered the Inquisition and broke open the jails in which suspected heretics were imprisoned.

After another long and scandalous papal election in which the pro-Hapsburg and the pro-French factions among the Cardinals were deadlocked for more than three months, a Cardinal named Medici, of middle-class Milanese origin and probably not related to the great Medici family of Florence, was elected Pope in December, 1559, and took the name of Pius IV. A canon lawyer like so many of his predecessors, he was the opposite of Paul IV both in temperament and in policy, for he was affable, vivacious, sociable, and kindly. He was of middle height, somewhat stooping and plump, with a broad forehead, blue eyes and a prominent nose. Like other Popes he advanced one of his nephews but that nephew, far from being unworthy, was St. Charles Borromeo who soon became his uncle's secretary for secret correspondence. The new Pope's early life had been edifying, and the only adverse criticism of him was that his bearing was somewhat undignified.

He promptly determined to reopen the Council of Trent. Diplomatically he had an easier game to play than Paul III and Julius III, for Spain and Austria, although friendly, were now separate sovereignties, and Philip did not always agree with Ferdinand who was now Emperor. Henry II of France had been accidentally killed in a tournament, so that Royal authority there was nominally in the hands of one after another of his sickly sons who were mere boys. A national Council of the French Church had been called which might increase the so-called Gallican tendency toward the independence of that Church. This national Council was another reason for Pius IV's haste.

Philip of Spain made no difficulties. The French regents urged that the Council of Trent be reopened not as a continuation of the former Assembly but as an entirely new Council. Ferdinand asked that the Pope should first authorize the marriage of priests and the Communion Cup to the laity—which had been customary throughout Christendom until the Twelfth Century and has always been the custom of the Eastern Churches. The Pope, however, gently but successfully insisted that the Council must be promptly reopened not as a new Assembly but as a continuation of the sessions already held. Laynez reminded a conference at Rome that all former

General Councils had been formally adjourned. Indeed only such adjournment made their decrees final.

Even at this late date Pius IV unsuccessfully invited a number of the non-Roman Catholic Sovereigns and religious bodies to send representatives to Trent: the Armenian and Russian Churches, the Coptic Church in Egypt, and the German Lutherans. He tried three times to have Queen Elizabeth of England send English bishops. As we have seen, her government under her chief Minister Cecil was anti-papal but as yet not harshly so. Twice she blew hot and cold. Once she told the Spanish Ambassador that she was as good a Catholic as any in the kingdom and was only playing for time for political reasons. On another occasion she was definitely in favor of receiving Pius IV's Nuncio until Cecil made a carefully staged and violent scene, whereat—as usual—she gave way.

Thus the Council in its third and last phase was composed only of bishops from countries which had shared its earlier sessions. The principal change in membership was the larger delegation from France.

In any case the Popes and their Court had already taken a fixed line, and now that Charles V was gone there was no chance of swerving them.

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The reopening ceremonies were held in January, 1562. As before, the bishops were most unwilling to go to Trent—the Pope had to give a formal order to those present in Rome before they would leave that city. He had named five Cardinal Legates to preside of whom four were present, headed by Gonzaga, a distinguished papal diplomat of the princely House of Mantua. Another was Seripando who had accepted the Council's decision of 1547 against Double Justification. Besides four of the five Legates, Cardinal Madruzzo the Bishop of Trent, was present, also three Patriarchs, eleven archbishops, ninety bishops, four Generals of Orders and a number of theologians of lesser ecclesiastical rank. As before, the great majority of those entitled to vote were Italians who numbered eighty-five to fourteen Spaniards, three Portuguese, three Greeks and a scattering of



other nationalities. Laynez and Salmeron were again named as papal theologians, although Laynez reached Trent only in August, having been delayed in France where the government had insisted on a public conference with the Calvinists.

In mid-February Ferdinand's Ambassadors made requests which repeated Charles V's policy of not irritating the Lutherans. The new Emperor urged that the Council should confine itself to ruling on discipline, that the *Augsburg Confession* be not placed on the *Index* of prohibited books, that all definitions be delayed until more bishops should arrive, and that the proclamation of the Assembly as a continuation of the earlier sessions at Trent be postponed. To anticipate events, the Council took no independent action on any of these points. After negotiations between Pius IV and Ferdinand, the Pope directed the Legates to go on with dogmatic decisions.

Until July the Council marked time while endlessly discussing whether the duty of bishops to reside in their bishoprics was a matter of divine law or only of ecclesiastical law. In May French Ambassadors came and proposed that the Council declare itself a wholly new Assembly. Early in July at last a Decree of reform was passed against clerical greed and simony. Bishops were to ordain to the priesthood no one who had not in one way or another an income enough to permit him to live decently. In the capacity of Papal Legates all bishops were authorized to reorganize benefices and parishes in their bishoprics as changing conditions might make this necessary.

The Council then returned to the familiar question of what had been in practice the sale of Indulgences, a matter which had been briefly treated in June 1546. Again frankly recognizing that there had been scandalous abuses in spite of reforming decrees passed by previous Councils, especially in regard to the behavior of friars who had specialized as indulgence preachers, it was now decreed that there were to be no more such specialists. Indulgences were to be published only by the bishops who alone might receive the voluntary gifts of the faithful, which they must compel in no way and for which they must set no fixed sum. It was now fifty-five years since Luther had posted his *Theses* at Wittenberg.

At the same time the assembled Fathers passed a temporizing Decree on the question of who in addition to the celebrant of the Eucharist should receive the Communion Cup. They declared that no one besides the celebrant is compelled by divine law to drink from the Cup and that either in the form of the bread alone or in that of the wine alone Our Lord is completely received, but as to Ferdinand's request of the Cup for the laity they said nothing. That question they postponed. Late in August then the question of the Communion Cup again came up for discussion in the Committee of Theologians, opinions were sharply divided. One abbot went so far as to say that the Emperor's proposal suggested heresy but he was cut short and rebuked by the presiding Legate. Laynez as usual summed up the discussion in a learned and closely reasoned speech.

Meanwhile there were frank criticisms as to the way Mass had been said. As in the matter of Indulgences, the Council admitted existing abuses—careless priests who either omitted the consecration or celebrated several times a day, others who elevated the Wafer so that it tangled in their hair or elevated the Chalice so as to spill the wine, still others who neither said the words nor observed the ceremonies, did not robe themselves correctly, or permitted hunting tunes and military airs to be played during the service.

By mid-September, the number of these entitled to vote having risen to one hundred and eighty-six, a full session voted a series of Decrees on the Sacrifice of the Mass, saying that it is a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, that Masses in honor of the Saints are legitimate, and that Mass should not be said in any vernacular language. The reader should understand that the Papacy has never considered the non-Latin liturgical languages used by the various Eastern Christian bodies as "vernaculars." The Council added that the mysteries of the service should be explained to the laity—which, one might think, would have been easier if it had been said in some language which the people understood as had been the case in the early centuries. At the same time Decrees against abuses in saying Mass and as to the conduct of the Clergy were passed. As a sort of after-

thought, another decree put the vexed question of the Communion Cup in the hands of the Pope.

Until late in October there were further debates on the divine right of bishops, with Laynez admitting that their sacramental powers and their collective power over the whole Church were indeed of divine origin but maintaining that their local jurisdiction came to them through the universal jurisdiction of the Pope. As yet there had been only five French bishops present, but in mid-November the powerful Cardinal Charles of Lorraine arrived, followed by thirteen bishops, three abbots and no less than eighteen theologians, most of the latter professors of the Sorbonne.

The interminable debate on the respective powers of bishops and the Pope went on through the winter, chiefly between the Spaniards and the pro-papal Italians, and ended only in the spring of 1563 after Gonzaga and Seripando had died and the former had been succeeded as first president by Cardinal Morone. He had been made a Cardinal by Clement VII thirty-four years before, and had been favored by Paul III and Julius III but as an exponent of gentleness toward heretics he had been suspected of heresy by Paul IV and had been imprisoned until the latter's death. Since he knew German conditions well, he succeeded in calming the desire on the part of some of Ferdinand's advisers for Decrees supporting the supremacy of General Councils over the Pope. This papal victory was won just in time, for the reinforced French delegation at Trent had been pushing the matter, angrily accusing Laynez of speaking evil both of the French Church and of the Council of Bâle. The Bishop of Paris had proposed that the Council should return to the election of bishops by the local clergy and people without the intervention of the Pope, as had been the Church's custom during Her first thousand years. Other French bishops were insisting upon what Father Fichter the biographer of Laynez calls the "real or supposed abuses" of the Roman hierarchy. Some even suggested that the Council ought to regulate papal elections by restoring the old popular vote of the Roman people which ever since the Eleventh Century had been reduced to the mere opportunity of "acclaiming" each new Pope after his election by the Cardinals.

In the Theological Committee Laynez as usual spoke last, this time for no less than two hours. In opposition to the Cardinal of Lorraine, the chief French protector of the Society of Jesus, the physically frail little Jesuit with his pale complexion, big hooked nose and flashing eyes vigorously defended papal power. Rightly or wrongly, he was accused of having said: "A crowd, even of bishops, is a many-headed beast, rash rather than prudent." Certainly he said that the Pope's powers came to him by divine right, that no legitimate Pope "can be reformed or judged by a Council," and that existing customs should be followed both in the Pope's right to nominate bishops and in the election of Popes by the Cardinals. If the Christ-given papal power to grant dispensations had been abused, that could be avoided by teaching people not to ask dispensations except for great cause and either by giving dispensations gratis or by giving the fee to the poor.

The Legates were secretly delighted at Laynez's boldness but felt obliged to disavow it. They wrote to the Vatican that he had given the French and the reforming party in general "great cause for complaints and misunderstandings." Strangely enough, however, miraculously as at least one Italian said, the crisis was appeased by the Cardinal of Lorraine himself, who faced about and supported the Pope.

In July the next full session, attended by no less than two hundred and thirty-seven voters, defined the seven sacraments with emphasis on the sacramental character of ordination, with further Decrees on the conduct of the clergy, and on the education in seminaries of candidates for Orders. The Decree on the election of bishops did not directly assert papal powers, but at least condemned anyone who said that bishops chosen by the Pope are not true and lawful bishops.

The next discussion, on the sacrament of marriage, was interrupted by a proposal that the Council which had been assembled to reform the Church should reform the secular Princes, a fantastic idea which came to nothing.

In November the next to the last session of the Council passed a Decree asserting the sacramental character of marriage and discouraging secret marriages. Although the bride and groom and not the priest were and are the ministers of



that sacrament, nevertheless the Council maintained that in future the exchange of vows must be as public as the circumstances of the couple permit. In normal circumstances and in Roman Catholic countries the chief witness to those vows must be a priest, and there must also be two other witnesses under penalty of rendering the marriage invalid. The accompanying Decree of reform once more forbade the scandalous accumulation of more than one income-producing post in the Church by any cleric, and insisted on the necessity for having irreproachable priests, bishops and popes.

Final adjournment was now discussed, and when word came that the Pope was seriously ill it was decided that the last session should be held on December 3, 1563, almost exactly eighteen years after the first session. Numbers had already begun to decline again, but there were still a hundred and ninety-five voters present. Decrees on purgatory, the cult of the Saints and the reverence due to relics and images were then passed, all on points which the Protestants had singled out for attack. There were also reforming decrees, one of which provided for the excommunication of Princes who authorized duels between their subjects. Another reduced to a practicable number the quantity of perpetual Masses to be held for the repose of souls by reason of endowments for that purpose—the depreciation of the currency had now gone so far since earlier endowments had been made.

Morone had all the Council's decrees passed since 1546 made irrevocable by having them all reread and confirmed.

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As a means for reaffirming papal power Trent was a complete success. On the other hand, discussion in the hope of reconciliation was ended. Nothing now remained but to fight the matter out.

## *XV. Armistice Line and Unhealed Wound*

THE Council of Trent was followed by more than eighty years of religious wars which ended indecisively, leaving the religious divisions of the West practically what they are today. During the first thirty-odd years of the period there were no less than eight rounds or bouts of civil strife in France with intervals of uneasy truce, while for most of this time Spain was engaged with rebels in the Netherlands, with England presently drawn in. After an interval of comparative peace, in 1618 there began the superlatively horrible Thirty Years War in the Germanies. When this last and worst of the great Religious Wars also ended in a draw, the treaties which followed by no means settled the question over which so much blood had been shed. Collectively those treaties were more like an armistice line on which opposing armies agree to pause on the positions where the chances of war have left them, while awaiting either a renewal of the conflict or a definite settlement.

Even today after our two colossal world conflicts the Wars of Religion seem like a nightmare because of their savagery. For some two centuries before Luther the medieval limitations of war, which had made the frequent armed scuffles between Christians socially tolerable, had somewhat weakened. A chief cause of this weakening had been the increasing use of ruffianly cosmopolitan mercenaries, temporarily hired and therefore serving only for pay and loot. The economic dislocations of the period had increased the floating supply of these wretches, often irregularly paid and supplied. The ferocious sack of Rome which we noted in Chapter IX of this book is a conspicuous example of their doings. Popular religious passion was now added to the motives for the outrages and massacres characteristic of such soldiers.

The reason why the ferocious wars of religion did not destroy the whole framework of Western society—as they

came near to doing in the Germanies—was that enough of the limitations upon war survived to keep campaigns short and armies small in proportion to the populations of the time. Although the medieval feeling that Christendom was one country had been replaced by conflicting popular passions which made people on both sides think of their enemies as men inspired by devils, nevertheless conscription and taxation comparable to those of today would have been morally impossible. Moreover there was no highly organized credit system.

Consequently the armies of the Reformation period were like little moving dots on the map. They left trails of frightful devastation behind them but those trails were narrow, and presently the armies would melt away. This and this alone explains why the Wars of Religion could go on so long.

For years before the end of the Thirty Years War, however, much of the Germanies had been so ferociously ravaged that the civilians there could hardly feed themselves as year after year they were bedevilled by the wolfish marauders of both sides. In one of the later campaigns when the Austrian Hapsburgs still had thirty thousand combatants in the field these were encumbered by no less than a hundred and thirty thousand camp followers—unhappy creatures who could keep body and soul together only by tagging along after troops who could still find something to steal. On other occasions the soldiers themselves were hard put to it. Once when a Commander retreating into winter quarters made the mistake of crossing districts already thoroughly devastated his men had to straggle so widely in order to live that he ended his march with only two thousand out of the twenty thousand with which he had begun it. Scholars estimate that in the prolonged carnival of theft, arson, rape, murder, cannibalism, plague, pestilence and famine one-third of the German-speaking peoples died. Naturally the survivors began to say: "Peace, peace, above all peace."

The work of the popular writers and artists who made the broadsheets reproduced in Beller's *Propaganda in Germany During the Thirty Years War* vividly shows the mood in which the long nightmare was finally ended. One shows a peasant on his hands and knees with a curb bit in his mouth

attached to reins which are held by a soldier who bestrides him, while in the background other soldiers are burning a cottage and murdering peasants and their families. Another represents war as a composite beast or demon, fantastic and horrible. Its only human parts are its left leg in armor with one foot on the throat of a ragged and prostrate soldier, and its right arm which holds a lance and two blazing torches. Its right leg is that of a horse, its neck and head those of a wolf with a mass of indeterminate objects crushed between his jaws. Its left arm has great claws which hold aloft sacred communion vessels while its gigantic rat-like tail thrashes about behind it, crushing grapevines and standing grain. In the background on one side villages and churches burn, soldiers abuse prostrate or fleeing people, and a living skeleton is about to stab a starved-looking, naked woman who holds a naked child by the hand. On the other side the monstrous beast lies on its back dead, killed by a revival of German piety as accompanying verses tell us. Its stolen treasures are falling out of its disembowelled body while people rejoice as the sun of peace rises above the horizon.

Before the seemingly endless nightmare finally ended, the hope of restoring the religious unity of Western Christendom by arms had long since faded.

As in Charles V's time, during the Thirty Years War it was the nationalism of Catholic France—in this case guided by Cardinal Richelieu—which prevented the success of the Emperor Ferdinand II's attempt to re-Catholize the Germanies. That Cardinal did so by financing the military genius of Gustavus Adolphus the Lutheran King of Sweden. Afterwards, when told of Richelieu's death Pope Urban VIII had said: "If there be no God the Cardinal of France has done well."

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At first the Armistice line established by the treaties of 1648 was preserved by mere exhaustion but that does not tell us why—after the exhaustion had passed—the boundaries between the Roman Catholic and what we may call the Protestant culture have remained fixed down to our own time.



I say "what we may call the Protestant culture" in order to include the Anglican communion in that culture in spite of the differences between Anglicanism and the unquestionably Protestant religious bodies.

To see how fixed the mid-Seventeenth Century armistice line still is we need only look at the map showing the predominantly Roman Catholic and the predominantly Protestant districts of Europe. Those maps show the religious boundaries west of the Iron Curtain as substantially the same as they have been for a long time. East of the Iron Curtain there seem to be no religious maps, and in any case it is still too soon to judge the extent to which Communist deportations and other changes have affected religious boundaries in Eastern Europe. Taking maps made before World War II and beginning from the north, Norway, Sweden, Finland and certain East Baltic districts are Protestant. Why? Because in the Seventeenth Century the Finns, Esthonians and Latvians were under the Lutheran Swedish Crown. Southeast of the Baltic there is—or was until 1945—the isolated province of East Prussia which was Protestant because it was for centuries under the Lutheran Hohenzollern dynasty but had on its western border a narrow strip of Catholic land recently known as the Polish Corridor which was formerly part of the Catholic kingdom of Poland. Most continental European Protestants live in or near Germany in an irregular triangle of land of which the northern base is on the Baltic and North Seas. The southeastern boundary of this triangle begins or began on the Baltic coast just to the west of the Corridor and runs in great curves toward the southwest, excluding the districts once belonging to the kingdom of Poland, the former Prussian province of Silesia which was annexed from Catholic Austria by Frederick the Great roughly two hundred years ago, after the religious pressure of continental European governments upon their subjects had practically ceased. Bavaria and the original hereditary lands of the Hapsburg dynasty are also outside of the Protestant triangle. Inside it are Berlin and the original territories of Lutheran Prussia, also Saxony and the central part of South Germany. Switzerland at or near the southern angle of the triangle is divided between the two cultures in what

is on the map an erratic-looking pattern. The western side of the triangle runs irregularly northward along the Rhine, including most of Holland within that triangle and with patches of both religious cultures here and there on either bank of that river. Holland is Protestant because the Calvinist Dutch rebels made good their independence from Catholic Spain, while Belgium is Catholic because the Spaniards were able to hold it. In other words the religious boundaries are obviously an armistice line which has hardened into an established frontier. If we look at the British Isles without reference to the claim of the Church of England and the other churches of the Anglican Communion to possess the Catholic Sacraments, the map shows England, almost all of Scotland and the northeast of Ireland as predominantly Protestant while the rest of Ireland is the one great exception to the pattern imposed by the Religious Wars. In spite of centuries of Protestant government, most of the Irish are Roman Catholic. Although in many places throughout Europe Protestant or Catholic minorities have survived, outside of Ireland the Seventeenth Century governments have had their way practically everywhere.

A religious survey of the United States, Leo Rosten's *Guide to the Religions of America*, says: "It seems that the major religious groups have developed in about the same relation to each other for about fifty years."

In other words the division between the two cultures is still fixed. Individuals change their religion. But for more than three centuries no mass conversions have crossed that gulf in either direction. The duration of the stalemate is amazing.

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The lasting effects of the drawn battle in which the Religious Wars ended three hundred years ago have left Western Civilization spiritually weakened, like a living body in which there is an unhealed wound.

This idea is of course unfamiliar and perhaps shocking to readers accustomed to thinking of religion as a purely individual matter. They may say of religious division: What of it? Some may think such divisions a positive good, claiming that people differ so much that no one religion can possibly

suit them all or that competition between different religious bodies is stimulating, especially to the clergy, just as "competition is the life of trade" in economic matters. Others may say that since religious disunion is inevitable, why bother about it? Still others may hold that religious differences are unimportant and only ethics are vital.

Why therefore should our religious divisions be called a wound? We cannot here attempt a detailed answer but it is at least a coincidence that within living memory our religiously divided society has entered into a Time of Troubles. We have suffered from two World Wars and we rightly go in fear of the third. Moreover that fear is complicated by class hostility and race hatred. Perhaps therefore the increase in strife not only within the West but throughout all Christendom may have something to do with our religious disunity.

Certainly men have a better chance of living peaceably together when they acknowledge common principles of right and wrong based upon a common religion. No sensible person ever said that religious unity would make a heaven on earth. People being what they are, there will always be some quarrels. In this book we have repeatedly noted the wars between the Catholic kings of France and the Catholic Hapsburgs. Nevertheless the universal temptation to quarrel is less likely to result in violence on a large scale when both sides can appeal to the same standards. They may not take the opportunity to agree or at least to soften their differences but at any rate the opportunity is there. If on the other hand there be no moral code common to both, then the only logical thing to do is to fight the matter out. There can be no logical reason for give and take except from fear of the consequences of fighting.

As to ethics being based upon religion, no one who has travelled in non-Christian countries will deny the difference which it makes to live among people who are definitely outside of our own religious tradition. There, even in the increasingly standardized Twentieth Century, the very clothes and the architecture are often unfamiliar. The differences are still greater between ourselves and Buddhist, Confucian and Hindu communities.

Historically, every known culture has been unified and stabilized by some religion. Our own ancestors, whether Greco-Roman or barbaric, were once pagans, and became Christian after the victory of the Catholic Church under Constantine. Moslem society from Morocco to Mindanao is still inspired by the religion of Mohammed. The social structure and habit of mind of India is that made by Brahmanism, otherwise known as Hinduism. That of China, at least until yesterday, was made by Confucius. Our own Western Civilization, originally that of Mediterranean Europe, which has now spread over so much of the world and has superficially affected the other civilizations, is still Christian in the sense that no other religion has been successfully preached in it but as a whole it is now only vaguely Christian. The vagueness may be symbolized by imagining a picture of a great cathedral with its outline blurred by a mist while in the foreground and clearly seen are some hucksters' stalls.

Both the Catholic and the Protestant cultures are weakened by internal dissension. In the Catholic this takes the form of a violent hatred of all religion which often masquerades under the name of anti-clericalism. The real anti-clericals are only devout people dissatisfied with what they consider excessive political power exercised by priests but the term is often borrowed by fierce atheists who massacre priests wholesale when they get the chance as in Spain during the recent civil war there. The Protestant culture on the other hand is religiously divided and subdivided. In 1955 a survey of the United States made by a well known popular magazine listed two hundred and sixty-eight organized religious bodies, most of them Christian and Protestant, including fourteen different kinds of Lutherans. Indeed many Protestant communions are so small as to escape any general investigation—for instance during World War II the present writer knew a colored man of military age who said that he was an ordained minister of the "Church Glorious" and therefore exempt from the draft.

As if these divisions were not enough, there are also the Eastern Churches who like Protestants reject the Roman Catholic claim to be the one true and universal church and



yet are not Protestant but have a culture of their own. Moreover within what we have been calling the Protestant culture there are an appreciable number of Anglicans who deny that they or their church are in any true sense Protestant.

The theological chaos extends into moral theology. Amid the din of clashing ideas it is no wonder that our society cannot even begin to form standards of justice, for instance as to the status of the industrial laborer or the rights and duties of the ownership of private property.

Our strife-torn century bears out Irving Babbitt's characterization of Machiavelli in *Democracy and Leadership* as the most "forward-looking man who ever lived" because the Florentine saw that men who are indifferent to moral principles will be governed only by the laws of force and fraud. What Machiavelli left out was that if people are not united in worshipping God they will be divided by following false Gods, potentially hostile to one another. Take for instance the recent war-time myth of "good" and "bad" nations. No one should fail to pity the sufferings and praise the heroic self sacrifice of many millions in our two World Wars, but when the admirable quality of patriotism can be so twisted as to make vast masses of people believe that they and those who are for the moment their allies are sainted angels while those who are temporarily their enemies are demons, then those masses might as well be worshipping local idols like Pallas Athene or Diana of the Ephesians.

Although the new cause of strife which has arisen in our religiously divided civilization, the so-called struggle between rich and poor, is not so sharply localized as the myth of the good and bad nations, its exaggerations are as destructive and as absurd. In its extreme forms of Marxian Socialism and Communism it propagates its own myth that propertyless laborers are essentially virtuous and should therefore be hostile to all property owners of every sort who are essentially wicked because of the mere fact of ownership. In other words Marxists deny the immemorial right to own property. Indeed Communism has become a highly organized religion of hatred contemptuous of all traditional morals.

While international and interclass hatreds have increased there has been at least a cooling of the old open and publicly avowed religious antagonisms. Indeed since the human propensity to quarrel is fortunately limited it would be strange if this were not the case. Although bigotry still exists, today it seldom comes to the surface. In regions where there are considerable Roman Catholic or non-Roman minorities—for instance the Irish Free State, Western Germany or the United States—it has become customary to allot to those minorities a certain proportion of public offices. While this is of course partly due to political expediency, it is reasonable to believe that it also shows an increase in mutual charity. In the delicate matter of the treatment of individuals who have changed or abandoned their religion, the distinguished journalist Arthur Krock writing in the *N.Y. Times* of November 14, 1958 says of the Governor of a certain populous State that “he was brought up in the Roman Catholic faith by his parents, then ceased to be a communicant while a college undergraduate but has affiliated with no other creed, and, in frequent resort for spiritual aid, goes to Catholic churches as well as to Protestant. This in one . . . campaign produced an underground intolerant attack on him. But it was sternly repudiated by the Catholic hierarchy of the state among whom an effort was made to exploit it.” More recently, the willingness of Protestants to vote for Kennedy as President is a striking example of political tolerance between religious bodies.

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On a much higher plane than that of political expediency, in 1854 Pope Pius IX, after recalling the doctrine that “outside of the Church there is no salvation,” charitably explained that those who do not belong to the visible body of the Roman Catholic Church may nevertheless belong to the Soul of that Church and are therefore not necessarily damned. An English translation of his Latin words is that “he who does not know the true religion is guiltless in the sight of God so far as his ignorance is invincible. Who would presume to fix the limits of such ignorance, amid the infinite variety and difference of people, countries and mentalities

and amid so many other circumstances?" Readers of Dante will remember how the question of the damnation of the heathen tormented him as it doubtless did many others. But now for Roman Catholics it disappears and with it the necessary damnation of heretics.

Also a new clean wind of doctrine has begun to blow through Protestantism, Anglicanism and Eastern Orthodoxy, the so-called Ecumenical Movement. St. John's Gospel tells us that Our Lord in the night in which he was betrayed prayed that all those who believe in him may be one, and in the light of that Gospel men have begun to see the great vision of the reunited Church. Although as yet even the outline of that Church is by no means clear, least of all to those who labor and pray that they or those who will come after them may enter it, at least the goal of unity has been seen, and that is much.

A valuable method of approaching all questions connected with reunion has been worked out. Its essence is simply that better acquaintance in a spirit of mutual charity is a necessary first step. Clearly the method of mutual concessions does not apply. In a diplomatic or business conference it is legitimate and may be praiseworthy to say in substance: "I will give up point A for which I have been contending if you on your side will give up point B. So now we are agreed." In considering Christian reunion if A or B is a point of conscience to him who maintains it then it would be a blasphemous surrender of truth for him to give it up. No such surrender should be expected or asked. On the other hand mutual, friendly explanations may result in the discovery that differences of language may conceal essential agreement. For instance certain learned Protestants have said in substance to Anglicans with whom they were conferring about the Apostolic succession through bishops: "If that is what you mean by Episcopacy then we see no conscientious objection to it. We think that when our spiritual ancestors broke communion with yours they did not so much because they objected to Episcopacy as such but because they objected to Prelacy, i.e. to giving bishops certain civil powers which our ancestors thought unchristian." The danger of "explanations" is obvious. It is that Christian charity may be watered

down into a spirit of loose-jawed kindness which neglects vital truths. But all ventures have their dangers, even the ventures of faith.

The Roman Catholic authorities have stood apart from the Protestant-Anglican-Orthodox Ecumenical movement, although recent signs of sympathy for that movement have indicated that absence from its conferences has been due not to hostility but to a conservative desire not to shock many of their own people, to whom the idea of such conferences would be novel—for which attitude there is much to be said. Meanwhile direct attempts to bridge the gulf between Roman Catholicism and other Western religious bodies can be counted on the fingers of one hand—Contarini, Charles V and Melanchthon have had few successors, among whom we should mention with honor the second Viscount Halifax and the Abbé Portal.

Ironically enough, a constructive solution for the Roman Catholic difficulty as to the validity of Anglican ordinations to the Priesthood and consecrations to the Episcopate came from the Anglican side in a way that many if not most of those who made it neither intended nor foresaw. The immediate result of the Papal Bull of 1896 against the validity of those Orders had been to convince even the minority of Anglicans at all sympathetic to papal claims that any attempt at negotiations should be indefinitely postponed. However, every ten years delegations of Anglican bishops from all parts of the world have become accustomed to meet at regular intervals at Lambeth, the London palace of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and there confer with the Archbishop and other Bishops of the Church of England. There had been a number of discussions of reunion between Anglicans and Protestants, and since Protestant ministers would have to be reordained before Anglicans could recognize them as priests, the Lambeth Conference of 1920 declared that Anglican clergy on their side would consent at least to conditional reordination under appropriate circumstances if that promised to forward Christian unity.

During the last thirty-five years, although an increasing number of individuals have begun to see that all Christians have much to gain from friendly knowledge of religious



bodies other than their own, the response to this idea has varied with the degrees of self-satisfaction in the bodies concerned. The authorities of no other communion have imitated the humility of the Anglican bishops who in 1920 announced their willingness to accept conditional reordination. Indeed after a series of conferences between an authorized delegation from the Church of England and one from the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Presbyterians finally refused to accept conditional reordination on the ground that it might imply recognition on their part of the invalidity of their existing Ministry, which has since Calvin's time been without ordination by bishops in the Apostolic Succession.

On the other hand in Germany since 1945, especially in East Germany in reaction against the atheist tyranny of Communism, there has been a splendid increase in mutual charity and cooperation. Writing from Europe in the *National Review* of May, 1956, Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn says:

"The collaboration between Continental Catholics and Protestants (who should rather be called 'Evangelicals'—the term 'Protestants' is not popular over here) would amaze Americans. There is a general acceptance of the fact that the division of the Church has been a major tragedy. At the same time it is being realized that, short of a miracle, it cannot be undone overnight and that, in the meantime, we ought to learn to live with and for each other.

"A few examples: Some years ago a big Catholic meeting was held in West Berlin. The presiding Catholic bishop was the guest of the Lutheran bishop, Dr. Dibelius, for the duration of the meeting. Several Lutheran churches were put at the disposition of the Catholics and accommodation for thousands of visitors was organized by the Lutheran parishes. No Catholic Diet takes place in Germany without an address by a delegate from the Evangelical Church . . .

"There are numerous Catholic-Evangelical joint enterprises, starting with the mighty political Christian-Democratic Union down to shelters for the two railroad missions. There is, every year, a Catholic-Evangelical theological conference on the highest level in which professors of divinity

participate under an alternating chairmanship. We have in Germany and Switzerland about forty churches held in common by the two denominations, and it is highly significant that the church of St. Petri in Bautzen (Soviet Germany), owned jointly by Lutherans and Catholics, had a rail, dividing the areas allotted to the two Faiths, removed two years ago. Under the Red Star, Rome and Wittenberg have taken a united stand in the sign of the Cross."

This unintentional by-product of Communist tyranny reminds us of some early verses by Chesterton:

Deep grows the hate of kindred, its roots take hold  
on Hell.

No peace or praise can heal it but a stranger heals  
it well.

Another attempt, on a smaller scale than the recent German conferences, at a preliminary approach toward corporate reunion by means of greater mutual charity through better acquaintance, is set forth in a touching book *Catholiques, Protestants, Frères Pourtant* by Canon L. Cristiani the Dean of the Faculté des Lettres at the Catholic University of Lyons and Pastor Jean Rilliet, a Swiss Protestant Minister. At one point the Pastor reminds the Canon that Calvinistic predestination has practically disappeared from Protestant thought. In another passage, however, the distinguished Canon misunderstands the spirit of the Protestant-Anglican-Orthodox Ecumenical movement when he asks whether Our Lord wished for a "federation of divergent churches ('une fédération d'Églises divergentes')"? Those who participate in the movement repulse as much as any Roman Catholic the idea of mutual concessions when anything believed to be an essential Christian truth is in question. They consider as merely exploratory any approach toward unity so far made.

\* \* \*

We may conclude this study of the tragic loss of Western unity into which our spiritual ancestors stumbled and our brief glance at the recent efforts to heal that still festering wound with a word on motive.

Mere worldly advantages which might flow from any

approach toward Christian reunion might be very great. For instance the most skeptical can appreciate how anyone in East Germany can face the Soviet horror with a higher heart thanks to the new Lutheran-Catholic friendship there. Intelligent skeptics might well do what they can to promote reunion. At the same time the hope for worldly advantage, however legitimate and useful, can never by itself be decisive. At most, friendly unbelievers can only be auxiliaries skirmishing on the flanks of a great phalanx of Christians marching in obedience to their Master's prayer "that they all may be one."

The march may be long and the ground before us almost impassable. If we are tempted to lose hope because we advance so slowly, we may remember that it was three hundred years after Our Lord's Ascension before Rome had her first Christian Emperor. We who work and pray for reunion must change the minds of many millions of well-meaning people. Who are we that we should expect a colossal miracle of rapidity such as was not vouchsafed to the early Christians?

When enough Twentieth Century Christians begin to ask themselves: What are the essential truths of our religion and what customs and beliefs should not stand in the way of reunion with our brothers in Christ then we shall at least be advancing.

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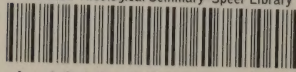






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